

# HISTORY OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



**1788 – 1988**

# **Kingsmills Presbyterian Church**



**1788 - 1988**

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*Printed at*  
*Outlook Press*  
*Rathfriland*

## “THIS STONE WHICH I HAVE SET FOR A PILLAR SHALL BE GOD’S HOUSE”

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On this, the two hundredth anniversary of our Church we could use the words of Jacob from Genesis chapter 28, verses 20—22 to sum up our thoughts.

These words have been put into verse in the second paraphrase and when read meditatively this should still be the prayer from our hearts today.

*O God of Bethel! by whose hand  
Thy people still are fed;  
Who through this weary pilgrimage  
Hast all our fathers led :  
Our vows, our prayers, we now present  
Before thy throne of grace ;  
God of our fathers! be the God  
Of their succeeding race.*

*Through each perplexing path of life  
Our wandering footsteps guide;  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
And raiment fit provide.  
O spread thy covering wings around,  
Till all our wanderings cease,  
And at our Father’s loved abode  
Our souls arrive in peace.*

*Such blessings from thy gracious hand  
Our humble prayers implore;  
And thou shalt be our chosen God,  
And portion evermore.*

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The history of our Church would have been impossible to write had it not been for the help given by so many people.

We would like to thank those within our own congregation who helped in any way especially in giving information and lending photographs and documents. We particularly wish to thank the following people :

- \* Mr. Brian Andrews for helping with the research.
- \* Miss Valerie Andrews, Mrs. Amy Cartmill and Miss Carole Herron for typing the manuscript.
- \* Mr. Carl Shields for taking some of the photographs.
- \* Miss Edith Watson for reading the final draft.

The following also deserve a big thank you :

The Staff at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Belfast, especially Mrs. Reid.  
The Staff at the Local History Library at Portadown, especially Mrs. Leckey and Mr. Canning.

The Deputy Keeper and Staff at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland.  
The Staff at the Public Records Office Dublin.

The Staff at the Registry of Deeds, Dublin.

The Staff at the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Mr. J. Gordon, Census Branch, Stormont.

The Staff at Ordnance Survey, Belfast.

The Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths, Newry.

The Regimental Museum Staff, Armagh.

The Staff at Army Records Headquarters.

The Staff at Public Archives, Ottawa, Canada.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Mr. Brian Weir, Southern Education and Library Board, Armagh.

The Staff at Monaghan County Library.

Mr. J. Davis and Mr. A. Smyth, Newry Reporter.

Revs. — M. Barr (formerly Clarkesbridge), S. Adair (Clerk of Newry Presbytery), E. McKimmon (Mountnorris and Tullyallen), J. Thompson (Dervock), T. V. Patterson (Buckna), D. Thompson (Lisburn), R. Nixon (Bessbrook), A. Bill (Bray), J. E. Barr (Sandholes), D. McBride (Saintfield), R. Vallely (Ballylinney), R. Rutherford (Limavady), A. Finlay (Belfast), J. Wilson (Loughgilly), C. Moore (Ballymoyer), Dr. R. Topping (Belfast) and Dr. Lockington (Armagh).

Mrs. H. Dickson, Dr. C. Torrie, Mrs. R. Patterson, Major and Mrs. Reside, Mr. T. Sinclair, Mr. J. Magowan, Mr. M. Moffett, Mr. J. Fulton, Mr. J. Adams, Mrs. J. Preston, Mr. E. Malone, Dr. S. McAteer, The Harrison family, Bangor and Switzerland, Mr. G. Porter, Mr. N. Meekie, Mr. H. Berry, Mr. Uel Wright.

Mr. Denis Brady, O.P.S. Photography, for taking the official photographs.

The Outlook Press for printing the book.

## A SPECIAL THANKS

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### The Late Mr. James Meeke Adams

It would have been extremely difficult to have made a start on this research in 1985/86 if we had not had the information given by the, then, oldest member of the Congregation, James Adams. Although ninety years of age he had a very clear mind.

He was baptised by the Rev. James Meeke and was very proud to have been called after this great man. As a young boy he worked from time to time at the manse and he had clear memories of the Meeke family and their successors, Rev. and Mrs. Torrie.

He had a keen interest in local history and folklore as well as a wide knowledge of the whole countryside.

James lived all his life in the townland of Lisadian just about half a mile from the Church. He was a skilled carpenter and did some of the work on the church property over the years.

In January 1985, after a long period in hospital, he moved to Cloughreagh Old People's Home where he enjoyed the last year of his life. He died suddenly in February 1987.



## FOREWORD BY REV. F. GIBSON

I would like to thank the authors of this brief history of the Kingsmills congregation for allowing me the privilege of a few words by way of introduction.

To obtain a glimpse of the past is both fascinating and profitable and ought to be an inspiration to seek yet greater things in the future. It was Macauley, was it not, who said, "A people which takes no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors, will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered by remote descendants." Perhaps our ancestors in this instance, are not all that remote! Yet two hundred years of history is a long time in the life of a congregation. Coming, as it does at the end of the second millennium of the Church of Christ upon earth it must contain some nuggets of experience and insight that we may bring to the surface and utilize to our benefit.

The past two hundred years has seen tremendous social, political and religious upheaval in this fair land of Ulster. Perhaps this is true of the South Armagh area in a special and poignant way. A perusal of this little book will show what I mean. The area in and around Kingsmills has known a more or less steady decline in population over these years. Various factors have contributed to this : the changing pattern of farming, the attraction of modern industry and commerce, economic constraints coupled with a changing cultural framework, and of course throughout many of these years, the uncertain and often tragic consequences of border politics.

Yet Kingsmills Presbyterian Church remains a thriving country congregation as numbers attending Sunday morning worship indicate! We would not claim to be the apotheosis of modern Ulster Presbyterianism, nor perhaps would we desire to be. However, it can be said, and I trust with humility, that Kingsmills attempts to bear witness to a Biblical and Reformed Christianity in an area of Ulster where these truths were once held dear. May God grant that it will be so once again.

The whole design and end of the gospel of Jesus Christ, both in its gospel provisions and in its applications, is to exalt and to bring Glory to the God of Heaven and earth. To this end, the message of the gospel is that men and women may be reconciled to this God. How is this reconciliation affected? — that is the great

burden of Biblical Christianity. To this question the various churches of Christendom give various answers. The answer of the Reformation and the Reformed churches, following the teaching of Scripture, is that a person is reconciled to God by Christ's work of redemption on the cross of Calvary. As Jesus Christ in the fulness of his person and work is embraced wholeheartedly and alone, so a man or woman, boy or girl is saved from their sins.

Eph. 2 : 8—10. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God : Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

It is this simple and yet profound message that we in Kingsmills would proclaim to the men and women of Ulster and of Ireland.

I have pleasure in commending this history — there is much of interest to local people and, I am sure, to others further afield. As you turn the pages you will be transported into a bygone age, an age that had problems and trials peculiar to itself. Yet, it was an age in which, it would be fair to say, common grace was a more abundant and precious commodity than seems to be the case today. If this little book helps us to see and understand our heritage more clearly, and if in turn by the grace of God, we may be enabled to build thereon, it will have achieved much.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Following a request from the Church Committee, we have written this brief congregational history, covering the two hundred years in which our church has been in existence.

It has not been a particularly easy task, due mainly to the fact that many of the church records have not been preserved. Certainly there are no written records available, prior to 1864 and this has left us more or less in the dark for those first eighty years.

The history has been written without access to any committee minute books held by the Church except for one dating from 1924-29. Two others dating from 1893-1923, which were in the possession of a member of the congregation were also used.

The framework for the book, came mainly from the following sources :

- \* information made available to us by Mrs. Reid at the Presbyterian Historical Society in Church House.
- \* recollections and first hand knowledge from the late Mr. James Adams.
- \* church records from Tullyallen and Mountnorris, access to which was very willingly given by the Rev. E. McKimmon.

Following this, the way forward became clearer and we are indebted to the countless people who contributed to the final result.

In writing this book we have been very careful to stick to the facts and hopefully this is an accurate account of life within the church and in the surrounding area over these past two hundred years. We have tried to cover all aspects of church life and in doing so we hope that the pages that follow, will contain items of interest to everyone.

It is hoped that the overall conclusion of each reader, will be one of thankfulness to God for leading and guiding our forefathers down through the years, so that there is still a Christian witness in the area in 1988.

## LOCATION OF THE CHURCH

Kingsmills can be a difficult place to find, even from an Ordnance Survey Map. It is neither a townland nor a village. It is simply the name given to a small area within the comparatively small townland of Lisadian, which lies on the northern perimeter of South Armagh.

Geographically it is within the parish of Loughgilly, in the Barony of Upper Orior. It is situated about seven miles from the town of Newry and a mile and a half from the nearest village, Whitecross.

The Church itself, stands four hundred feet above sea level in a picturesque rural setting about two hundred yards from a second class road linking Bessbrook and Whitecross. The view from the churchyard takes in the hills of South Armagh, stretching from the outskirts of Newtownhamilton in the west and ending in the south with Slievegullion, the highest peak in the county, rising to a height of nineteen hundred feet.

The Church is situated a short distance from the River Blackwater which has its source near Drumilly School and merges with the Cusher river below the Windy Gap. The land at Kingsmills is made up of heavy clay soil that has been improved over the years with good farming techniques. Under the E.E.C. regulations it all falls into what is termed the "less favoured area" and as such the farmers receive extra subsidies and grants to offset the difficulties experienced.

The congregation of the Church comprises ninety families who come mostly from within a three mile radius bounded by Belleek in the south, Ballymoyer in the west, Mountnorris in the north and Divernagh in the east.



## THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

Although the Church has been in existence for two hundred years, it has had a comparatively small turnover of ministers. The first three men spent almost one hundred and twenty years between them in Kingsmills — an average of forty years each and a rare occurrence for any church.

In the two hundred years there have been twelve ministers. Three of these — Rev. Torrie, Rev. Kerr and Rev. Graham (for part of his time) were assistants to the senior minister, Mr. Meeke. Rev. Meeke's ministry lasted for a total of sixty nine years, all spent in Kingsmills and for forty nine of these years he was the active minister.

Below is a table showing the names of the ministers of the church and their time with the congregation :

Name of Minister	Dates of Ministry	Length of Ministry in years
Rev. William Beattie	1792 - 1825	33
Rev. Alexander Henry	1826 - 1863	37
Rev. James Meeke	1864 - 1913	49
Rev. Edwin Torrie	1914 - 1920	6
Rev. William Kerr	1921 - 1927	6
Rev. James Graham	1927 - 1949	22
Rev. Ronald Adams	1949 - 1958	9
Rev. D. H. Thompson (lay agent)	1958 - 1965	7
Rev. Dr. Robert Topping (stated supply)	1965 - 1977	12
Rev. James Thompson (assistant to convener)	1978 - 1979	1
Rev. T. V. Patterson	1979 - 1985	6
Rev. Frank Gibson	1986 -	

# **PART ONE**

## CHAPTER 1

# PRESBYTERIANISM IN IRELAND

### Christianity in Ireland

The early Christian church, about which we read in the New Testament, did not survive for very long in its original state. Man soon introduced his own ideas into worship and before many centuries had elapsed the Church was very far removed from its original form.

However, James Ussher, the Archbishop of Armagh from 1625 - 1656, in his writing "Discourse on the Religion anciently professed by the Irish" stated that a comparatively pure form of Christianity survived in this country, running, as it were, underground, like some of our Irish streams, even when Roman corruption was most rampant, until the beginning of the seventeenth century. This was when the organisation of the Presbyterian Church in its present form, took place. This being the case, the Irish Presbyterians can trace their ecclesiastical lineage right back to the simple minded, uncorrupted believers of the early Church here in Ireland.

### St. Patrick

One of the greatest influences on Christianity in this country was St. Patrick but, sad to say, the Presbyterians show little or no interest in him. He has been adopted largely by the Roman Catholic Church, yet his teachings were far removed from anything which that Church has ever taught over the centuries. Indeed his teachings are very close to what Presbyterians believe.

In a passage from the "Confession" which Patrick wrote, he explains his theology in his own words. What has become known as the 'Creed of St. Patrick' has been quoted below :

"I am not able, nor would it be right, to be silent on such great benefits and such great grace as (God) hath vouchsafed unto me in the land of my captivity, for this is our recompense, that after we have been corrected and brought to know God, we should exalt and confess His wondrous works before every nation which is under the whole heaven : that there is none other God, nor ever was, nor shall be hereafter, except God the Father, unbegotten, without beginning from whom is all beginning, upholding all things as we have said : and His Son, Jesus Christ, whom we

acknowledge to have been always with the Father before the beginning of the world, spiritually with the Father in an ineffable manner begotten before all beginning; and by Him were made things visible and invisible; and being made man, and having overcome death, He was received into Heaven unto the Father. And the Father hath given unto Him all power, above every name, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God. Whom we believe and we look for His coming, who is soon about to be the Judge of the quick and dead, who will render unto every man according to his works, and hath poured into us abundantly the gift of the Holy Ghost and the pledge of immortality, who maketh the faithful and obedient to become the sons of God the Father and joint heirs with Christ. Whom we confess and worship, one God the Trinity of the sacred Name. For He Himself hath said by the prophet, '*Call upon me in the day of thy tribulation and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt magnify me.*'

As to Roman Catholicism, St. Patrick never once mentioned the Bishop of Rome. Neither did he ever elevate the Virgin Mary. He did not believe in celibacy nor the confession. There is no trace of his ever administering 'last rites'; no mention of the Mass or Purgatory. He believed in a bishop for each church and a church for each bishop, with no higher authority and this is the way our Presbyterian Church functions today.

From the time of St. Patrick until the early 12th century — a period of some seven hundred years, the Christian Church in Ireland operated quite independent of Roman control and many believe that it was in a fairly pure form.

The late Church of Ireland Bishop of Down and Dromore, W. S. Kerr in his book, "The Independence of the Celtic Church in Ireland" (published 1931) explains how the Roman influence came about. He states that in 1151, a Papal Legate, John Paparo, came to Ireland as the first emissary from Rome. At Kells he assembled a Synod and he succeeded in establishing a considerable amount of control over the free and independent Church.

About twenty years later, Rome was still not happy that they had made enough impact, so Pope Adrian IV wrote to Henry II, King of England asking him to enter the island of Ireland and bring the Church which he found there entirely under Roman Control. This Henry did and Pope Alexander III issued a statement in which he confirmed that the King of England had done well to invade and conquer Ireland.

Also at this time Pope Alexander wrote three letters, one to King Henry, one to the Irish Bishops and one to the nobles of Ireland. The letter to the Bishops was really an instruction to support Henry and the letter to Henry was one of fulsome praise in which he described him as the 'pious King and magnificent Prince'. For the Irish people, Pope Alexander had nothing good

to say. They had 'through the enormity and filthiness of their vices drifted far from God'. Amongst their offences was the eating of meat in Lent, the non-payment of tithes and their lack of reverence for ecclesiastical personages.

So the British came in and the Church in Ireland went under Roman rule for some four hundred years until the Reformation set it free.

### The Reformation

God chose a miner's son, Martin Luther to lead the Protestant Reformation in the early sixteenth century. As a monk he read one day that "the righteous shall live by faith." (Romans 1 : 17) The great truth dawned on him; prolonged fasting, performance of ceremonies, payment of fees to priests and Churches, even a human being's noblest deeds are not good enough to earn God's favour. To be acceptable to God he saw that a man must repent of his sins, trust in Jesus Christ with his whole mind and heart and receive by faith God's gift of new life.

A whole new spiritual awakening began. Presbyterianism as historical reformed biblical Christian faith was given its definitive shape by John Calvin of Geneva. He wanted to get the Church back to that of New Testament times and he therefore patterned it on the Bible. The whole system of government of our church was initiated by Calvin.

His teachings had a tremendous influence on a Scottish man called John Knox. Knox, an ordained priest, returned from Europe to Scotland in 1559 and was responsible for organising the Reformed Church in Scotland. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Presbyterians began to be subjected to a great deal of hardship under the Crown. This continued over the years and many Scottish families, hoping for a greater amount of religious freedom, set sail for Ulster.

### The Presbyterians in Ulster

At first the Presbyterians here did experience religious freedom but the Established Church soon began to interfere. The ministers were driven out of their churches and there was much persecution.

Then came the Black Oath, where all Presbyterians were required to swear allegiance to the King, Charles I and obey all royal commands no matter how wicked or unreasonable. If they refused they were fined and imprisoned. This worked for good, however, and with hindsight we can see the hand of God in the whole matter. The Presbyterian ministers and people who were driven out of the country as a result of this Black Oath, escaped to a large extent, the Massacre of 1641, in which so many thousands of Protestant inhabitants perished.

In February 1642, a Scottish army under General Munro, arrived in Carrickfergus to put down this Romanist rebellion and as a result of the arrival of these Presbyterians and their settling in the area, the first Presbytery was constituted at Carrickfergus, in June 1642. Congregations were soon established in other areas of Co. Antrim and in Co. Down. Ever since this time there has been a strong Presbyterian Church in Ulster.

It is reckoned that by 1660 there were 100,000 Presbyterians in Ulster. They had been encouraged greatly during Oliver Cromwell's period in power (1649 - 1660).

However in 1660, when Charles II regained the throne there was further persecution for them. Presbyterian ministers were either to submit to the Prayer Book or be turned out. Presbytery meetings were banned. Ministers were ejected from their parishes and forbidden to preach. Often they gathered in small groups in the dead of night to hear God's word being explained to them. Strangely in 1672, Charles granted £600 per year to the Church. This grant was known as the Regium Donum. However it wasn't paid regularly and it faded out altogether by the time James II came to power in 1685.

With the defeat of James in 1690, by his Calvinist son-in-law, William of Orange, another new era dawned for the Church. The Regium Donum of £1,200 per year was granted. William did his best to help the Presbyterians in Ireland but he was unable to induce the Irish Parliament to relieve them from all the pressures of the penal laws. All he could do was to quash their prosecutions when they were charged with non-conformity. When he died in 1702 the Presbyterians had lost the best friend they ever had on the British throne.

His sister-in-law, Queen Anne had no such sympathy for the Presbyterians. In 1704, the iniquitous Test Act was introduced into Ireland. By this law anyone who held a public office, whether civil or military, had to take communion in an Episcopal Church within three months of their appointment or else lose their office. This Act was designed to draw Presbyterians into the Established Church but that didn't work. They refused communion in the Episcopal Church and lost their jobs as a result. By the end of Anne's reign many of the meeting houses were boarded up and the Regium Donum was withdrawn.

George I restored the grant and in four years he had increased the Regium Donum by £800 per annum. In 1719 an Act of Toleration was passed allowing greater freedom for worship but the Test Act still remained. At this time emigration to America reduced the Presbyterian population significantly and in 1729 it is said that almost six thousand of them crossed the Atlantic.

Apart from these external difficulties encountered by the Church there were also problems within. Some of the ministers

wished to be relieved from subscribing to the Westminster Confession of Faith — the recognised creed of the Church and recognised by all true Presbyterians as the best uninspired synopsis of biblical doctrine available to this very day! After a lot of argument and bitterness lasting several years, these men broke away in 1726. They were known as Non-Subscribers but it wasn't until one hundred years later that they actually formed the Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church.

### **The Seceders**

The split of 1726 caused a weakness and many of those ministers left in the Church were sympathisers of the non-subscribers. Evangelical Presbyterianism was on the wane. This gave opportunity to a group of Scottish Presbyterians called Seceders to come and set up churches here. They had had problems in their own country over government interference in the Church. They were also very evangelical men who had a desire to spread true religion. The ordinary Presbyterian laity were glad to see them in Ulster. The first Secession Church was opened at Lylehill near Templepatrick in 1744 and in the one hundred years which followed one hundred of such congregations were formed in Ulster including our own at Kingsmills. In 1784 their ministers received an endowment of £500 per annum from the Government. Four years prior to this the Test Act was repealed.

Around this time also, an Act was passed declaring the validity of all marriages celebrated among Presbyterians by ministers of their own denomination and another Act permitted Seceders to swear by lifting up the right hand instead of kissing the book.

### **The Burghers and the Anti-Burghers**

So that we can understand a little about our own Church in its early stages, it is important to know about the Burghers and Anti-Burghers. Kingsmills was a Burgher congregation.

Shortly after the formation of the Seceders in Scotland, there was a problem over whether or not their members, if elected to town councils, should take an oath to 'uphold the true religion presently professed within this realm'. A majority of Seceders saw the 'true religion' clause as meaning the Protestant religion and had no hesitation in taking the oath. These became known as the Burghers. The others thought that it referred to the Church of Scotland and they considered the oath to be sinful. They were referred to as the Anti-Burghers.

Although the oath was of no concern in Ireland, nevertheless the Seceders here took sides. The Burghers were particularly strong in Co. Monaghan where by 1764 they had six congregations.

In October 1779, the Burghers held their first synod meeting in Monaghan town. There were twenty two churches which had been divided into three Presbyteries — Down, Monaghan and Derry. Later the Tyrone Presbytery was formed and in 1796, the year in which our own minister, William Beatty, was Moderator, the Armagh Synod came into being and Kingsmills belonged to this Synod until 1840 when the Seceders and the Synod of Ulster united to form the General Assembly.

While both branches of the Seceders were progressing, the Synod of Ulster (the original Presbyterians) showed no such signs of renewed spiritual life. For the twenty years preceding 1789 not one new congregation was erected. Biblical teaching was ignored by the clergy. Intemperance was a big problem and many other social evils had crept into the Church.

However the 1798 rebellion seemed to jolt them out of their slackness. From that date there was a more religious spirit among both ministers and people. More evangelical preachers appeared, meeting houses were repaired or rebuilt and a careful check was kept on the education of candidates for the ministry. The New Light (Liberal) group within the synod saw that they could no longer adhere to the rules of the Church and so they withdrew linking up with non-subscribers to form the Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church in 1829 as mentioned previously.

### **The formation of the General Assembly**

With the liberals out of the way and a much more evangelical Synod of Ulster, the ground was now prepared for a Union between the Seceders and the Ulster Synod. This union took place in 1840 and it was given the title of "the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland". The Synod of Ulster had 292 congregations and the Seceding Synod had 141 — a total of 433 congregations and 650,000 souls.

### **Disestablishment of Episcopacy**

In 1869 amid much controversy the Irish Church Act was passed, disestablishing the Church of Ireland (Episcopal Church) and at the same time withdrawing the Regium Donum from the Presbyterian Church and discontinuing a grant to the Roman Catholic College at Maynooth. No particular denomination was to be at any financial or legal advantage over the others. At this time, to make up for the loss of the Regium Donum, a Sustentation Fund was set up to support the ministers financially and disestablishment was welcomed by the majority within the Church. From this time there has been complete freedom for all Presbyterians in Ulster and indeed complete freedom for all denominations.

## CHAPTER 2

# SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF THE AREA PRIOR TO 1788

### The English in Ireland

The Anglo Norman Invasion of 1170 brought the first group of English settlers to Ireland when, as a mark of gratitude for their help, Henry II granted his followers land, especially in the South East of the country. By about 1300 the English had gained two-thirds of Ireland but over the years many settlers had adopted the language and customs of the Irish and English power was declining. Only the district known as the 'Pale', which stretched from Dublin to Dundalk, obeyed English law.

The Irish chieftains were keen to rid themselves of English domination and, seeing how the Scots under Robert Bruce had won their independence, they offered his brother Edward the Crown of Ireland. This he accepted and he was crowned at Dundalk in 1315. Three years later he was killed at the Battle of Faughart and the English continued to impose their influence on Ireland.

At different stages during the reign of the Tudors more land was brought under English control. One of the earliest attempts to colonise the Province of Ulster was made during the reign of Elizabeth I and it concentrated on the County Armagh area. In 1572, Captain Thomas Chatterton received a grant on condition that he would plant and control Orior and the Fews within seven years. Within a short time he was killed by the O'Hanlons of Orior and his family refused to risk their lives furthering this pursuit.

### The Plantation of Ulster

This really got underway following the Flight of the Earls in 1607. Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone and O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnel, who feared capture by the English following ten years of battle, fled to the Continent. Other rebel leaders, who had long kept the North of Ireland in constant turmoil, were overthrown leaving vast amounts of land available for what became known as the "Plantation of Ulster". The forfeited lands were surveyed, divided into portions consisting of 1,000, 1,500 and 2,000 acres each and granted to approved settlers on certain conditions. The occupiers of the largest portions had to build a castle and

bawn within four years. (A bawn was a walled enclosure, usually with towers at the angles, and within it was placed the house or castle. It was sufficient to secure the inmates and their cattle from the incursions of the marauding Irish). They were to plant on their estates forty-eight able men, eighteen years old and upwards, of English and Scottish descent.

Those who were given 1,500 acres were obliged to build a strong stone or brick house and bawn within two years and those with the smallest portion had only to build a bawn. Both groups were also bound to plant a proportionable number of British families on their possessions and to have a good store of arms to protect themselves from the native Irish.

The plantation covered Counties Derry, Donegal, Tyrone, Armagh, Fermanagh and Cavan. Monaghan was excluded because of its loyalty to England and Antrim and Down were also left out because they had already been settled to a fair degree, especially with Scotsmen.

In County Armagh, according to the project for planting, the whole of the arable and pasture land, amounting to 77,750 acres was to be allotted in 61 portions to English and Scottish settlers. A portion was also assigned to the Primate and some land in each portion was given for glebes for the incumbents. In other words, the rector in each parish was given a certain amount of land which he could use in whatever way he liked in order to improve his income.

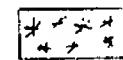
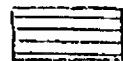
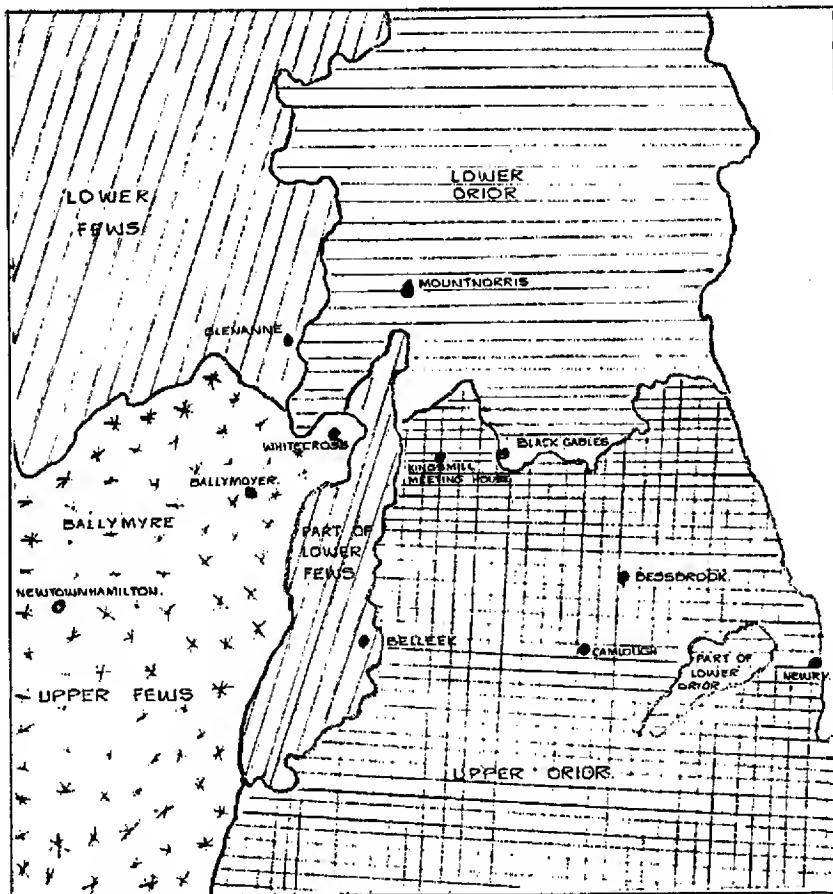
The County was divided into the baronies of Armagh, Tiranny, O'Neill East, O'Neill West, Upper Fews, Lower Fews, Upper Orior and Lower Orior.

So in these first few years following the granting of the land, the sound of the axes rang through the forests as the settlers felled trees for timber and hammers and crowbars were used to quarry stones to build houses, castles and bawns which rose quickly all over the province. Pynnar in his survey of 1615 tells us that at this time there had been erected 107 castles with bawns, 19 castles without bawns, 42 bawns without castles or houses and 1,897 dwelling houses of stone and timber.

These settlers needed to be stout hearted men. During the long winter nights they had often to encounter howling packs of hungry wolves around their dwellings. (Wolves were very troublesome and numerous here in the seventeenth century and were not extinct in this country until 1710). By day time the sight of an arrow flying from the bow of a wood kerne (native Irish foot soldier) would soon tell the settler that he was in enemy territory. Still he held his ground and many more of his fellow countrymen continued to join him.

Among these early settlers was Henry Acheson who came from Scotland in 1610 and took over 1,000 acres near, what is now

## BARIONAL MAP OF THE DISTRICT



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called, Markethill. He brought nineteen Scottish families with him. In 1628 he sold the property to the forefathers of the Earls of Gosford. Hamiltonsbawn also came into being at this time when John Hamilton, a Scot, built a bawn in that district and settled twenty six British families. In 1611 The Manor of Kamlough (Camlough) was granted. The first owner died soon after and in 1619 it was taken over by Sir Toby Caulfield who built a bawn and castle in the townland of Maghernahely.

Mountnorris — (Originally called PORT NORRIS) was in existence before the Plantation. It was a fort erected by Lord Mountjoy and General Norris during the war with the Earl of Tyrone (1594 - 1603). In 1611 it was described by Carey as "a good fort, well ramparted with bulwarks, a palisade and deep ditch. Some of the inhabitants of English and Scottish have settled and built good house after the manner of the Pale, a great relief and comfort for passengers between Armagh and Newry".

The land attached to the fort originally belonged to the O'Hanlons and around the time of the Plantation it was passed to the Annesley family. They had descended from Robert Annesley, a Captain in Elizabeth I's army. His son Francis was Constable of the Fort in 1612. He was created Baron of Valentia and Baron of Mountnorris in 1628. He was also a Member of Parliament for Armagh. On the Plantation of Ulster, Port Norris was granted a further 300 acres and a Saturday market was granted as well as a fair on the 5th and 6th May. Later a fair was held on the second Monday of each month.

During the reign of Charles I, Primate Ussher of Armagh was granted six townlands comprising 1,514 acres for the purpose of founding a college for the classical education of Protestants. Armagh City was considered a more suitable site, however and what became known as the Royal School was formed there.

The Annesley family sold their property of 4,300 acres to Robert Cope from Loughgall in 1738 and the Cope family held it until the Lands Acts early this century gave the tenants the opportunity to buy. The Copes owned Keadymore, Keadybeg and most of Drumcrow in the Kingsmills area.

### **The Effects of The Plantation on the Kingsmills Area**

The 1609 Plantation of Ulster had little effect on the immediate townlands of Kingsmills. Penders "Census of Ireland 1659" shows that there were no Protestant settlers here. In the survey the families were divided into two groups — Irish or Scots/English with this latter group representing the Protestant faith. Pender gives the figures for four townlands in this area — There were six families in Lisdeane (Lisadian), fourteen in Duffernagh (Divernagh), eight in Maytowne and six in Keadymore and all were listed as Irish.

In the entire Loughgilly parish there were only twenty Scots/English families. However, with the Plantation at Drumbanagher there were seventeen Scots/English families in that area and in Upper and Lower Creagan (Creggan) there were fourteen of such families. These would probably have been settlers on Annesley's estate at Mountnorris as would have been another thirteen Scots/English families at Lisdrumcorr.

The following is an account of some of the local areas connected with our church and it shows us how the land was held in 1788 when the church was built.

### Lisadian and Drumherrif

These townlands were originally owned by Murtagh Magennis but in the early seventeenth century he was charged with treason and the lands were taken from him. A group of trustees were appointed to take charge of the estate, among them being Sir Francis Annesley from Mountnorris. They gave the tenancy to the Savage family who already farmed a number of the surrounding townlands. They remained as tenants until a group known as the "Governor and Company for making Hollow Sword Blades in England" took over. In 1708 they sold the land to John Moore who owned Drumbanagher estate and he held it for the next seventy years. In 1777 it was sold to a Presbyterian family from the city of Dublin and ten years later Kingsmills Presbyterian Church was built in the townland of Lisadian.

### Divernagh, Rathcarbery and Lisnalea

Like Lisadian and Drumherrif, these three townlands were also farmed by the Savage family in the seventeenth century. The last of this family known to have held the property was Patrick Savage, the younger. He lived in Divernagh and in 1719 he signed an agreement handing over the property to Rev. Benjamin Parry who was a minister of the Established Church. Not all of Lisnalea or Rathcarbery was included in this estate. An area which now lies close to the Bessbrook/ Mountnorris road, amounting to 295 acres formed the glebeland of Loughgilly Parish and the rector could obtain part of his income from this.

Rev. Parry died childless and his estate passed to his niece, Ellinor, whose father was the Bishop of Killaloe. She had married Richard Hawkshaw, the Grand Juror for County Meath and County Dublin. His father had come to Ireland in 1660 from Chester and he settled in County Meath. So through this marriage to Miss Parry, the Hawkshaws became landlords of these townlands as well as others in the Newry area.

The Hawkshaws, like many of the landed families of the time were involved in the law, church or army.

Richard Hawkshaw's grandson was the Rector of Kilmarrin, Co. Monaghan and he had nine sons. Eight of these entered either the army or the church and the oldest one who was to inherit the lands was a Dublin lawyer. When Kingsmills came into existence this man, William Hawkshaw was the landlord.

### Ballymoyer

This part of our area has had a very interesting past and quite a lot has been written about it. Prior to the Plantation it was in the hands of the MacMoyer family (there are several spellings of this name). The original name for Ballymoyer was TAHALLON and it was believed to have been the site of a religious establishment founded by St. Patrick. He is said to have appointed St. Killian to preside over it. A church was built, but it was destroyed by fire in AD 670. This was later rebuilt.

The word Ballymoyer — BAILE MAC MNOIR means "the town of the Keeper's son" and was so called because the Mac Moir family held the treasured Book of Armagh here. The Book of Armagh is one of the few books which have come down from the early days of history. It is a copy of a much older manuscript and contains the life of St. Patrick and a copy of The New Testament written in 807 AD. Some authorities think that this manuscript was written in part by the hand of St. Patrick himself. The safekeeping of this book was committed to a native probably a descendant of the Primate family, whose office was regarded as both honourable and important. The Keeper also received a good endowment of land in virtue of his office. So the MacMoires were given eight townlands called the lands of Ballymoyer amounting to 7,281 acres. These townlands were :

BALLINTEMPLE (townland of the church), AGHNAKIRK (a field of the hen), TATE (country place of residence), CORLET (a weir or a moor), CAVANAGHKILL (hilly wood), LUIGANAGH (pools of a field), OUGHTLACKIN (upper slope of a hill) and KNOCKAVANNON (a hill of the hill).

The 1615 Rental of the Archbishops of Armagh lists the McMoires. It reads as follows :

**Territor de Ballemoire (1615) 8 balliboes (old name for townlands)**

Donaghy McMurchy for 21 yeirs an incombe xvi<sup>1</sup> (£16) holdeth two balliboes called Lurgenagh and Lisnecan als Lackan at xvi<sup>1</sup> per an.

Patrick McImoyre, Patrick McGohigan and Toell McDonnell hold two balliboes unsett — Knockivenan and Aghnecoirck, at xviii<sup>1</sup> per an.; two oxen of two yeire old, foure fatt muttons, eight henns, two fatt hoggs, foure barrells of oats, xx days work with a man and garran.

Cormock McImoyre and Patrick McImoyre, his sonne, hold two balliboes unlett — Cavanekelly and Corlett, at xvii<sup>1</sup> per ann.;

two oxen of two yeire old, foure fatt muttons, eight henns, two fatt hoggs, two barrells of barlye and two of oats, xx days work with a man and garran.

Morrice McImoire, Turlo McImoire and Shane McImoire, 13d.4d. to have two sessioes called Mullany and Tremullagh at xvi<sup>1</sup> per an.; one oxe in every year and halfe, two fatt muttons, foure henns, one fatt hogg, two barrels of oats, tenne days work with a man and garran.

Patrick McImoyre and Patk. his sonne, one balliboe Balletemple and one sessioe in Ballintate at xi<sup>1</sup> 6s. 8d. per an.; one oxe, two fatt muttons, foure henns, one fatt hogg, two barrels of oats, tenne days work with a man and garran.

The book remained safe in the hands of the MacMoir family until 1680, until the then Keeper, Florence MacMoir, found he had to pawn it. The land they had been given was taken from them some time prior to this and was given to a man called George Fairfax by the Secretary of Armagh.

### Oliver Plunkett and the MacMoires

In 1669, Oliver Plunkett was appointed Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland. He tried his best to raise the standards within his church at the time and he also upset some of the Franciscan priests by allowing Dominicans to form in their area. Some of these Franciscans went all out to destroy Plunkett. They were led by John McMoir. As students in Rome he and Hugh Duffy decapitated Plunkett's effigy in the college library and were expelled. After completing their studies in Spain they came back to Ireland where MacMoir was warned by Plunkett to improve his drunken life style. So a plot was hatched led by John MacMoir and his cousin Florence, a school master from Ballintate. They accused Oliver Plunkett of holding a treasonable correspondence with the French Court. They pretended that 20,000 Frenchmen were to land at Carlingford and that Plunkett was to join them at the head of 70,000 men. The Archbishop was arrested and tried in Dundalk but no witnesses appeared against him. The trial could not proceed and the Jury (all Protestants) refused to act against him. Instead they ordered the arrest of the MacMoires and it was only with difficulty that they escaped.

Meanwhile Plunkett was taken to prison in London where there was strong anti-Catholic feeling at the time. MacMoires story was believed. Florence was encouraged by his cousin to go to London to testify in the hope that by giving evidence he might regain his lands. So in 1860 Florence pawned The Book of Armagh and used the money to get to England to join eight other witnesses (four of whom were priests) and give evidence against

Plunkett. Their false witness sent the Archbishop to the scaffold and he died a martyr for his faith.

The MacMoiries both died in prison. Florence who died in 1713 was buried as an out-cast in Ballymoyer Churchyard where his tombstone was later erected bearing the cold and cheerless inscription, "Body of Florence Wyre who died February 12th 1713". Being a disgrace to their name that branch of the family had taken on the surname Wyre or Weyer. In this same year the Church Rental for Ballymoyer shows that Samuel Weyer (alias McMoyer) had joined the Presbyterian Church. This was probably due to local antipathy to Florence.

Owing to the abhorrence in which his memory was held the tombstone erected to Florence was subjected to the grossest indignities, stones were heaped on the grave and a tree which grew at the top of it was bound with iron hoops to prevent his evil spirit from getting out. Later on the broken tombstone was removed for preservation by Marcus Synott to Ballymoyer House but with the demolition of this house in the 1930's, no trace of the stone remains. There is a theory, however, that it is now part of the floor of an out house in the yard at Ballymoyer.

### **The Effects of the Plantation on the Ballymoyer Area**

The Plantation of Ulster made little difference around Ballymoyer. The 1615 Rental shows that the inhabitants were all native Irish and by 1664 this had not changed — all native Irish were Roman Catholic. In 1713 they were still largely so but by then the Presbyterian Church had penetrated to the extent of four families (possibly Pattersons) and the Established Church was made up of two families — the Synotts and one other.

### **The Synotts**

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the eight townlands of Ballymoyer were leased by the Archbishop to Richard Synott, a direct descendant of David Synott, the Catholic Governor of Wexford, when Cromwell besieged it. He was drowned in the River Slaney trying to escape. Tradition has it that his son Timothy was saved and brought up as a Protestant. He was in Londonderry during the siege of 1689.

Ballymoyer House was built in 1782 by Sir Walter Synott. He was the first of that name to actually live in the area. When he settled in Ballymoyer there was scarcely a tree or shrub to be seen. The lands were heathy and barren and the agricultural implements were very backward. He set about constructing good roads in the vicinity and planted trees. His habits and examples were followed by the peasantry so that by the time our church was built the Ballymoyer area was one of the most go-ahead in all of Co. Armagh.

## The Belleek Area — Originally known as Baleek

In the sixteenth century when Elizabeth I was trying to tame the native Irish, an English garrison was stationed at Baleek. It was besieged and taken over by O'Donnell of Tyrconnell. Not one Englishman was left alive. By the end of the seventeenth century the Acheson family owned the land. Greig's Report of 1821 on the Gosford Estates in Co. Armagh show that the Gosfords (descendants of the Achesons) owned what was called Baleek Manor. It consisted of the following townlands : Belleek, Carrowmannon, Carrickgallogly, Carrickananny, Upper and Lower Creggans, Crunagh, Drumnahunshin, Drumnahoney, Drumgane, Derlett, Greyhillan, Lisdrumchor and Lurgyross.

The Gosfords owned these townlands until the beginning of this century. In 1826 the Parish of Belleek was constituted by separating twelve townlands comprising 5,509 acres from the Parish of Loughgilly. Eight of these paid tithes to the Curate of Belleek and four to the rector of Loughgilly. These townlands which formed the Parish of Belleek were : Tullyawe, Rathcarbery, Lisadian, Drumherriff, Tullywinney, Greyhillan, Carrickgallogly and Belleek. The Parish Church was built at Carrickgallogly in 1827.

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So in 1788 when Kingsmills came into being the land in this area was in the hands of four large land owners — the Hawkshaws, the Wilsons, the Synotts and the Gosfords as well as some which was owned by the Established Church. In 1788 there were no such places as Whitecross or Kingsmills. The postal town for the area was Mountnorris.

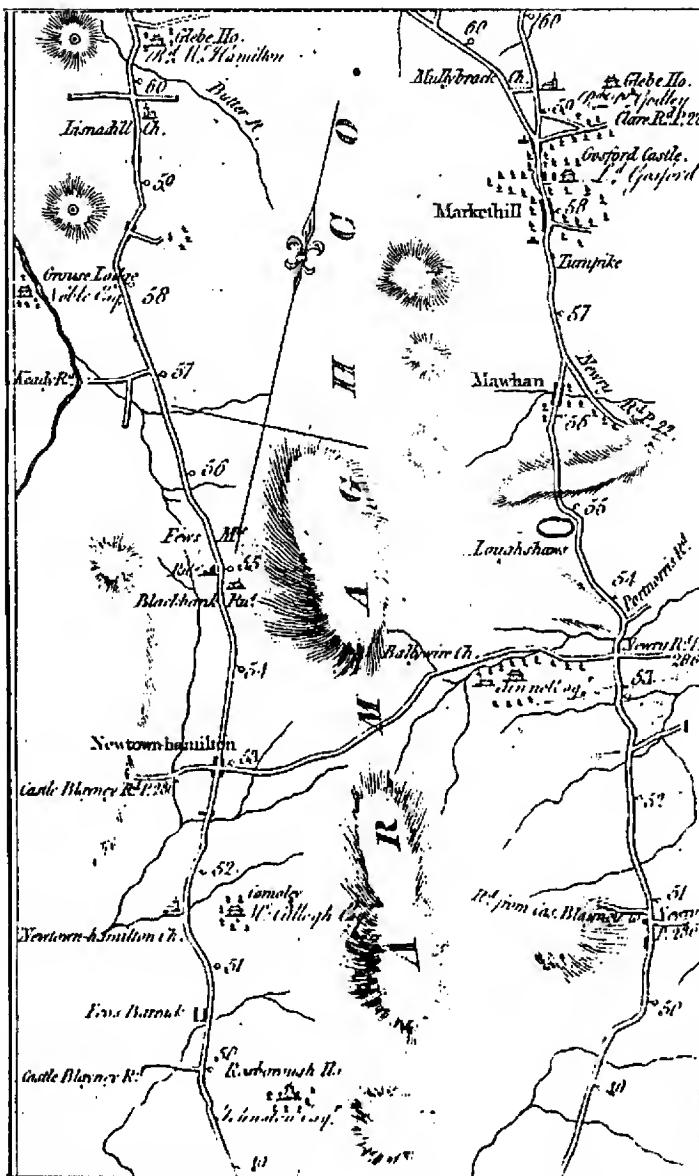
**POPULATION OF BALEEK MANOR IN 1821**

	Adults		Children		Servants		Cottiers		Total Pop.
	M	F	M	F	M	F			
<b>BALEEK MANOR</b>									
Upper Baleek	21	21	31	30	1	1	—	—	105
Lower Baleek Village	7	6	12	13	—	—	—	—	38
Lower Baleek	16	16	36	38	2	3	2	—	113
Upper Carromannon	18	22	38	42	—	—	—	—	120
Mid Carromannon	12	12	27	23	—	—	—	—	74
Lower Carromannon	20	22	37	31	2	5	1	—	118
Carrickgollogly	22	23	32	48	3	1	—	—	129
Carrickananey	10	11	30	19	—	—	—	—	70
Upper Cregans	16	16	39	32	5	4	3	—	115
Lower Cregans	19	16	29	25	1	1	—	—	91
Upper Crunaght	5	3	12	2	2	1	1	—	26
Lower Crunaght	5	5	13	11	1	4	—	—	39
Upper Drumhoney	8	8	10	24	—	—	—	—	50
Lower Drumhoney	12	13	21	27	1	1	—	—	75
Drumnahuncheon	12	11	22	24	2	2	—	—	73
Drumgean	6	9	20	17	1	2	—	—	55
Dirlet	15	10	15	22	7	5	5	—	79
Greyhilla	17	14	28	23	3	1	—	—	86
Upper Lisdrumchor	27	27	58	48	7	7	4	—	178
Lower Lisdrumchor	6	6	7	5	2	2	—	—	28
Lurgiross	17	19	36	32	1	3	—	—	108
<b>Total of Baleek Manor</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1,770</b>	

**TABLE WHICH SHOWS TYPE AND NUMBERS OF  
LIVESTOCK KEPT ON THE FARMS AROUND  
BALEEK IN 1821**

TOWNLAND	Cows	Cattle	Horses	Sheep	Pigs
<b>BALEEK MANOR</b>					
Upper Baleek	30	4	5	4	3
Lower Baleek Village	12	1	4	0	2
Lower Baleek	38	7	8	2	6
Upper Carromannon	27	2	6	0	3
Middle Carromannon	20	1	5	0	5
Lower Carromannon	43	0	15	3	0
Carrickoliogly	44	6	14	7	8
Carrickananey	17	0	5	0	0
Upper Cregans	27	8	10	0	12
Lower Cregans	21	2	10	0	3
Upper Crunaght	8	3	3	0	3
Lower Crunaght	17	6	6	7	4
Upper Drumhoney	15	2	6	0	2
Lower Drumhoney	14	1	3	0	3
Drumnahuncheon	23	2	7	2	2
Drumgean	22	6	10	0	9
Dirlet	27	10	11	3	11
Greyhilla	32	6	12	0	1
Upper Lisdrumchor	56	12	20	12	10
Lower Lisdrumchor	5	1	2	0	3
Lurgiross	26	2	8	0	4
Total on Baleek manor	524	82	170	40	94

The Markey Brothers from Carrickgallogly were classed as 'large' farmers. They had 48 acres carrying a stock of thirteen cows, three other cattle, four horses, seven sheep and three pigs.



(Taken from Taylor and Skinner Road Maps)

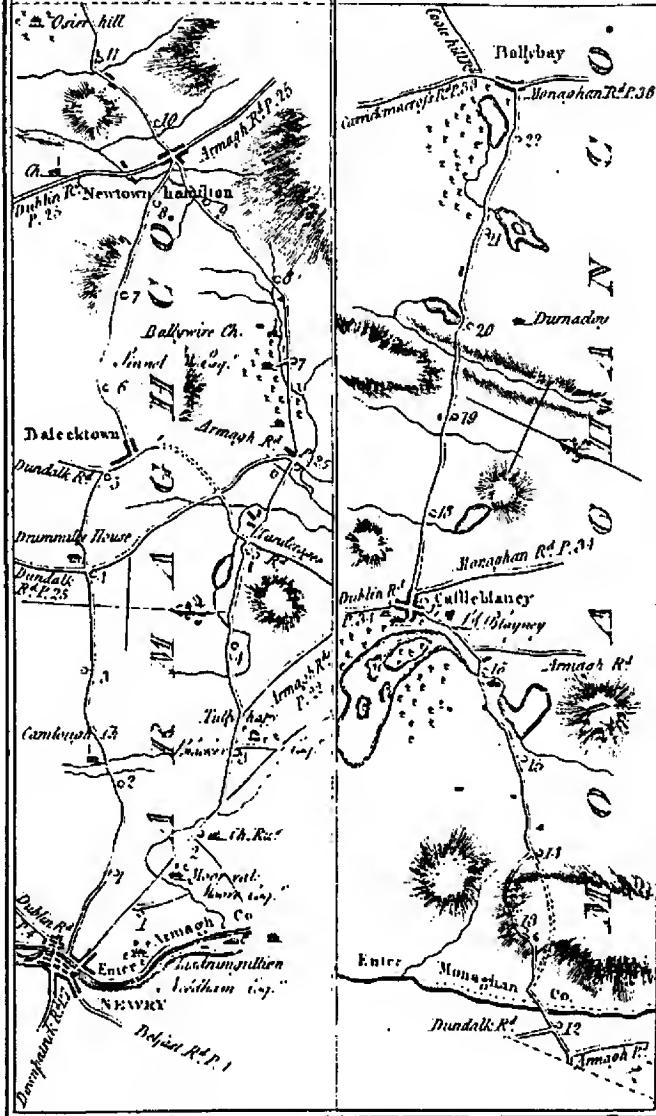
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*Map showing the road from Newry to Newtownhamilton via Ballywire (Ballymoyer) — 1777 (eleven years before the building of Kingsmills Church).*

*(Taken from Taylor and Skinner Road Maps)*

## *From NEWRY to BALLYBAY*

	M.	F.	M.	F.
Kinston-hamilton	3	3	93	93
Connelley	7	7	37	37
Kalobay	5	5	123	123
Kinston-hamilton by Chabotkewi	2	2	8	8



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*Map showing the main road south from Newry to Castleblayney — 1777*

## CHAPTER 3

# THE ORIGIN OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

As we saw earlier, there were some Presbyterians in this part of Co. Armagh from about the time of the Plantation in the early seventeenth century.

A church appears to have been organised in Markethill as early as 1609 and any few Presbyterians living in this direction would have worshipped there. The numbers of Scottish immigrants increased greatly after 1696 partly due to some very lean years there caused by famine and the fact that there was plenty of cheap land waiting to be occupied over here.

In 1739 there was a split in the Markethill Church. They asked the General Synod for permission to form themselves into two separately organised Congregations with their own Ministers. At the same time a number of Presbyterians in outlying districts to the South of Markethill, applied to the Armagh Presbytery for occasional preaching in their own area. This request was granted and in 1742 a church was built in the Mountnorris district at Tullyallen and a Congregation was established. It was called Mountnorris Church.

In those days it was difficult to obtain ground on which to build meeting houses as most of the land was in the hands of Episcopal Landlords and a lot depended on their attitude.

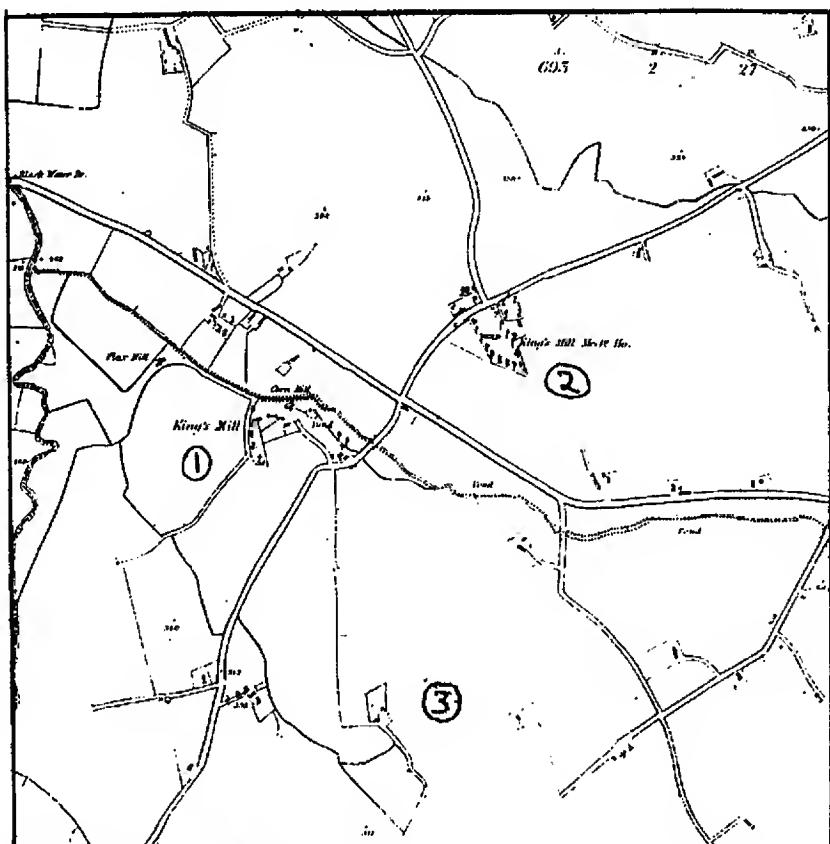
Rev. John Mulligan was the first Minister of Mountnorris. By 1778 and under the Ministry of Rev. Francis Turrentine, there were 600 families attached to Mountnorris Congregation, many coming from as far away as Eshwary and Knockavannon. The Church building was no longer able to serve the needs of the people and it was decided to erect a new one. However the site could not be agreed upon — some wanted it built on the site of the old Church at Tullyallen while others wanted it built in the village of Mountnorris.

In 1791, the Presbytery visited the sites in question and recommended that Rev. Turrentine should start the Church in Mountnorris village. This he did and those who stayed in Tullyallen later attached themselves to the Seceders and built a new church.

While all this infighting was going on, a number of families south of Mountnorris had ideas for a church of their own. They started to meet for worship in the loft of a corn mill owned by a man called Alexander King at Lisadian. This would have been in the early 1780's. Families came from as far away as Eshwary, Tullywinney, Divernagh, Maytown, Ballymoyer and Belleek. Naturally they talked of going to King's Mill and this is how our church got its name. Over the years, however, the two words "King's Mill" have been joined together and for some time now it has been referred to as "Kingsmills".

The 1835 Edition Ordnance Survey Map shows :

- (1) King's Mill below the Crossroads.
- (2) King's Mill Meeting House above the Crossroads.
- (3) The house in which the first Minister lived.



Nothing is known about Alexander King, but it would be safe to assume that he lived in a house beside the mill and farmed some of the land around it. He would have leased it from the Landlord, Richard Wilson. By the early 1800's he was either dead or had left the area because it was then that the Boyle family took over the mill. With the increase in flax production in the 1850's, they converted the corn mill to a scutch mill and it remained in use until around 1950. Now, only the walls of the original mill are standing, the current owner being Mr. Desmond Boyle.

A mill stone has been preserved in Mr. Eugene Malone's garden just in front of what was the site of King's dwelling house.



In this area the King Family seem to have their origins in the Townland of Outlacken and it is most likely that Alexander came from there. The Ballymoyer Parish Register of Baptisms from 1820 - 1836 lists a number of Kings and the christian name, "Alexander" runs through the King families into the present generation of those who worship in our Church. So they could all probably claim to be a descendant of the mill owner who allowed his loft to be used for worship two hundred years ago.

ORDNANCE SURVEY – ARMAGH  
SHEET 8



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Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the  
controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

MAP OF THE AREA SHOWING

- (1) The site of Mountnorris Church (now Tullyallen) where the Kingsmills people originally worshipped.
- (2) Site of the Church built in Mountnorris Village in 1791.
- (3) Kingsmills Church, built in 1788.



*Boyle's Flax Mill, which was originally King's Corn Mill. The Original Congregation worshipped in the Loft of the building on the left.*



*All that remains of the old Mill — 1986*

By 1788 there were enough people meeting here to warrant the building of a proper "Meeting House". Again however, the choice of a site was a problem. Many of the worshippers came from the Ballymoyer direction and they were keen to erect a building in their own vicinity. But common sense prevailed. A church building should be in the centre of its people and so an area of ground was offered to them by Richard Wilson. It contained two acres, one rood and eighteen perches (about 1 hectare) and it was part of a farm which had been leased to Robert Wallace.

A simple church was soon erected to meet the needs of the people. Like all country Meeting Houses of its time, it was a low thatched building, with an earthen floor, much smaller in area than our present structure.

The descendants of many of those who walked into the first service in Kingsmills in 1788 continue to worship Sunday by Sunday in the present building.

A close examination of any old grave stones, still remaining, reveal the names of some of the families who founded the Church — names like Rogers from Tullywinney, Irwins from Carrowmannon, Johnstons from Belleek, Quas, McClures, Harpurs, McMullans and Adams from Lisadian, Harrisons from Divernagh, McIlroy's, Wallaces and Williamsons from Rathcarbery, Elliotts from Drumherrif, Pattersons from Cavanakill, Kings from Outlacken, Robb's from Drumnahoney, Andrews from Carrickananny and Whelans from Tullyawe.

The oldest headstone remaining in the graveyard is one erected in memory of a Mrs. Harpur from Lisadian, buried in 1799.

The Church was formed under the umbrella of the Secession Burghers Synod (see page 20) and it is likely that they sent probationers to the area until 1792 when the first Minister was installed. Two years prior to this, Kingsmills made out a call to a Mr. George McAuley but the Synod meeting at Armagh received objections to him and the call was set aside. He became the Minister of Richill in 1792.

While the majority of Presbyterians in this area joined Kingsmills, some did not. They continued to worship in either Tullyallen or Mountnorris (which by 1791 was in operation).

Baptismal records in the early 1800's, show that Rev. William Magowan (Mountnorris) baptised children in Tullywinney, Cavanakill and Drumnahoney. Later however, these families seem to have transferred to Kingsmills.

## CHAPTER 4

# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. W. J. BEATTY

### Rev. W. J. Beatty — (1792 - 1825)

William James Beatty was born in the North west of Ulster in 1764 though exactly where is not known. He may have come from Strabane and it appears that he studied for the ministry in Selkirk, Scotland under the care of the Derry Presbytery commencing in 1785.

In 1789, the Secession Burghers Synod met in Armagh and recommended William Beatty among five probationers who would supply the Armagh area for that year. The following year he was sent back to Scotland for three months preaching experience. On his return he spent three months in each of the three Burgh Presbyteries which existed — Monaghan, Derry and Tyrone.

In 1792 the Synod met at Stewartstown and they considered calls made out to William Beatty from both Monaghan and Kingsmills congregations. After deliberation they decided that he should go to the latter and presumably his installation took place here in the Autumn of 1792.

He lived in a little house across the road from the original church in King's Mill (see page 36) and it is thought that he brought a servant boy called Sinclair with him when he came to the area. It must have been an exciting challenge as the first minister of a new church and no doubt Mr. Beatty entered into the work with much enthusiasm. Numbers in the congregation grew and he was a fine preacher.

In 1793 he attended the Synod meeting in Armagh taking with him Mr. John Todd, the first representative elder from the congregation of Kingsmills. It is interesting to note that the elder present from Sandholes Church near Cookstown was a man called Alexander Henry, thought to be the father of the next Kingsmills minister, Rev. Alex. Henry.

In 1796 Mr. Beatty gained high honour. At the eighteenth Synod meeting in Randalstown he was elected Moderator despite being only thirty two years old and having only been in the ministry for four years. At the same meeting it was decided to form a new Presbytery to accommodate churches in the south

eastern part of Ulster. This was to be known as the Presbytery of Armagh and it was to comprise of the following churches — Tassa(gh), Drumhillary, Armagh, Richhill, King's Mill, Tullyallen, Donacloney, Scarva and Drumbanagher — nine churches in all.

Mr. Beatty continued as Moderator in the following year and the minutes of the meeting in Armagh show that John Todd was still attending as the representative elder.

### Form of Worship

In these early days worship was much different compared with now. There was probably no pulpit in the meeting house and people would have sat on stools. Families were large and as numbers within the church grew, the building would have been filled to overflowing. In such cases it was usual to sit for the prayers. The psalms used for praise would have been read line by line, the minister reading first. Then they were sung, very often from memory, for many had no psalter and some could not read it anyway. When the communion service was held a table was put up the aisle in the church and the congregation distributed the elements to each other. The original communion vessels used in our church were made from pewter and can be seen in the picture below. They were in use until 1856.



The elders played an important role. They were given districts within the congregation for which they were responsible. They had the final say on whether or not people were admitted as new

communicants or allowed to have their children baptised. Elders were expected to interview all communicants and parents who had children to be baptised. They were questioned about how they lived and what they believed. They had to give assurance on such things as organising family worship, private prayer and teaching the young to pray as well as keeping the Sabbath. Cases of immoral behaviour were brought in front of the Kirk Session and the wrongdoers disciplined.

The following is a list of questions which were to be put by an elder when he went to visit a family within the congregation.

- Had you family worship here last night and this morning?
- Do you every Saturday night cause turf, water, washed potatoes and kail or greens, to be got into the house sufficient to serve till Monday morning?
- Is your house swept every Saturday night and the ashes removed so that the family goes to rest before it is too late?
- Did you catechise your family last Saturday night, observing to do it every Saturday night?
- Do you carefully restrain your family from idle jesting, giving by-names, and quarrelling with each other?
- Do you watch that the children play not games on the Sabbath Day?
- Do they use any charms on certain days such as November 1st, or encourage spaemen?
- Do they go to cock-fights, racing, or dancing?
- Do they attend bonfires on Midsummer's Eve?

The following questions were put to seceding ministers at the meeting of Privy Censures.

- Do you observe family worship morning and evening?
- When occasionally abroad all night, do you keep family worship where you lodge?
- Do you mind secret prayer at least morning and evening?
- Do you pray for ministerial abilities and success in your work?
- Do you not only maintain a conversation becoming the Gospel, but also endeavour to promote edifying conversation?
- Are you careful to spend Sabbath evenings in religious exercises and in family instruction?
- Do you travail with the sick in conversing with them concerning the state of their soul, and suit your instructions to them, or do you give them some general exhortations?
- Do you endeavour, as you have opportunity, not only to reprove persons chargeable with gross swearing, but also such as are guilty of using minced oaths?

## Life in the Area during Mr. Beatty's time

There are two useful accounts of this area which help us a great deal to see what the area was like and how the people lived in the early years of the eighteen hundreds. These are Sir Charles Coote's "Statistical Survey of County Armagh" drawn up in the years 1802 - 1803 and a "Survey of the Parish of Ballymoyer" by Rev. Ferguson, Curate of Ballymoyer and dated 1816.

Kingsmills was more or less equi-distant between two of the main roads leading from Newry. There was the one by Mountnorris to Markethill, the principal stage between Armagh and Newry. It was described as a thriving town with a neat session house and a good inn. The road from Markethill to Newry was a turnpike road and Coote thought it was perhaps the worst road in Ireland and a disgrace to the county. Mr. Beatty would have used this road quite a bit to get to meetings in Armagh. (See page 33).

The other main road to the south of Kingsmills was the one linking Newry and Castleblayney. It passed through Camlough which was "hardly a village" then and Baleek, described by Coote as a "mean village"; then on through Newtownhamilton "a wretched stage". This was the busiest road in the county carrying farmers and traders from counties Cavan and Monaghan to the Newry Market. Although the distance between Newry and Castleblayney was around twenty miles it took a good day to complete the journey because the road was in such a bad state of repair. According to Coote "the traveller must not only risque the failure of the best appointed chaise and horses but also run no small danger of having his bones broken in the attempt" — a reference to the road surface. (See page 34).

Compared with these main thoroughfares the roads round Ballymoyer were good because the Synotts were not absentee landlords. They lived on the estate and it was in their own interests to construct good roads. Coote observed that more cattle were reared and grazed around this area than in any other part of the county though the land was used mainly for tillage.

The people were quite well off around the beginning of the nineteenth century. The average size of farm was about five acres and for top quality land the yearly rent was 3½ guineas per acre with poor or mountainous ground fetching 5 shillings (25p) per acre. Those five acres were divided up into roughly one acre for potatoes, 1¾ acres for oats, 2 acres for grass and ¼ acre for flax. The soil was turned mostly with a spade although the better off had a plough and harrow pulled in many cases by cattle from neighbouring farms. Not all farms had a horse. Below is a list of the main farm implements and their cost in 1800.

Spade	6 shillings	(30 pence)
Shovel	2s.6d.	(12½ pence)
Harrow	£1-2-9	(£1.14)
Wheelbarrow	11s.4½d.	(57 pence)
Fork	1s.6d.	(7½ pence)
Plough	£2-5-6	(£2.27½)
Hay Rake	7s.1d.	(35½ pence)
Shafts for implements	8d.	(3½ pence)

Livestock Prices :

Milch Cows	£10.00	
Dry Cows	£6.00	
Sheep	10 shillings	(50 pence)
Fat Cattle	£10-10-0	(£10.50)
Working Horses	£7	

No dairying was carried on in this district but most people kept a cow for their own use. The fields under an acre were fenced with quick set hedges and a lot of time was spent in planting screens and clumps for shelter. The cattle were tied to a stake and given a range of rope until the plot within their reach was eaten down. Then they were moved on.

Fairs were held in the following places :

Baleek — February 3, May 3, August 3, November 3.

Markethill — May 5, June 22, October 26.

Newtownhamilton — May 7, November 7.

Poyntzpass — once a month.

Portnorris — February, May, July, October.

The fairs and markets were attended by retailers of hats, stockings, shoes, cloth and wool. There were also pedlars selling haberdashery and hardware.

The clothes which the family wore and their bedding, feather ticks, curtains, quilts, sheets and blankets, were all made in the home.

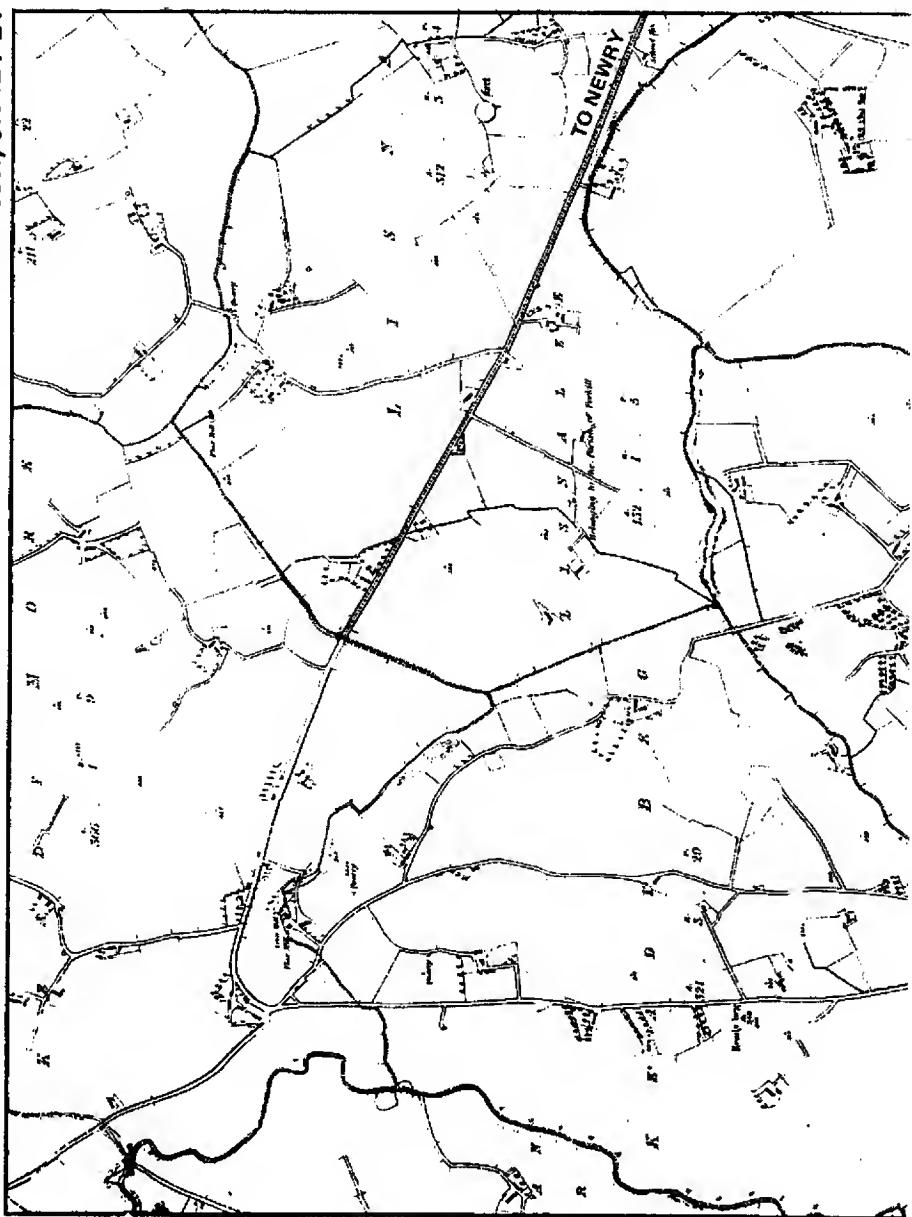
The building of a comfortable cottage cost about £7 or £8 and when we compare this to the price of a milking cow or a working horse we can see the value that was placed on the livestock.

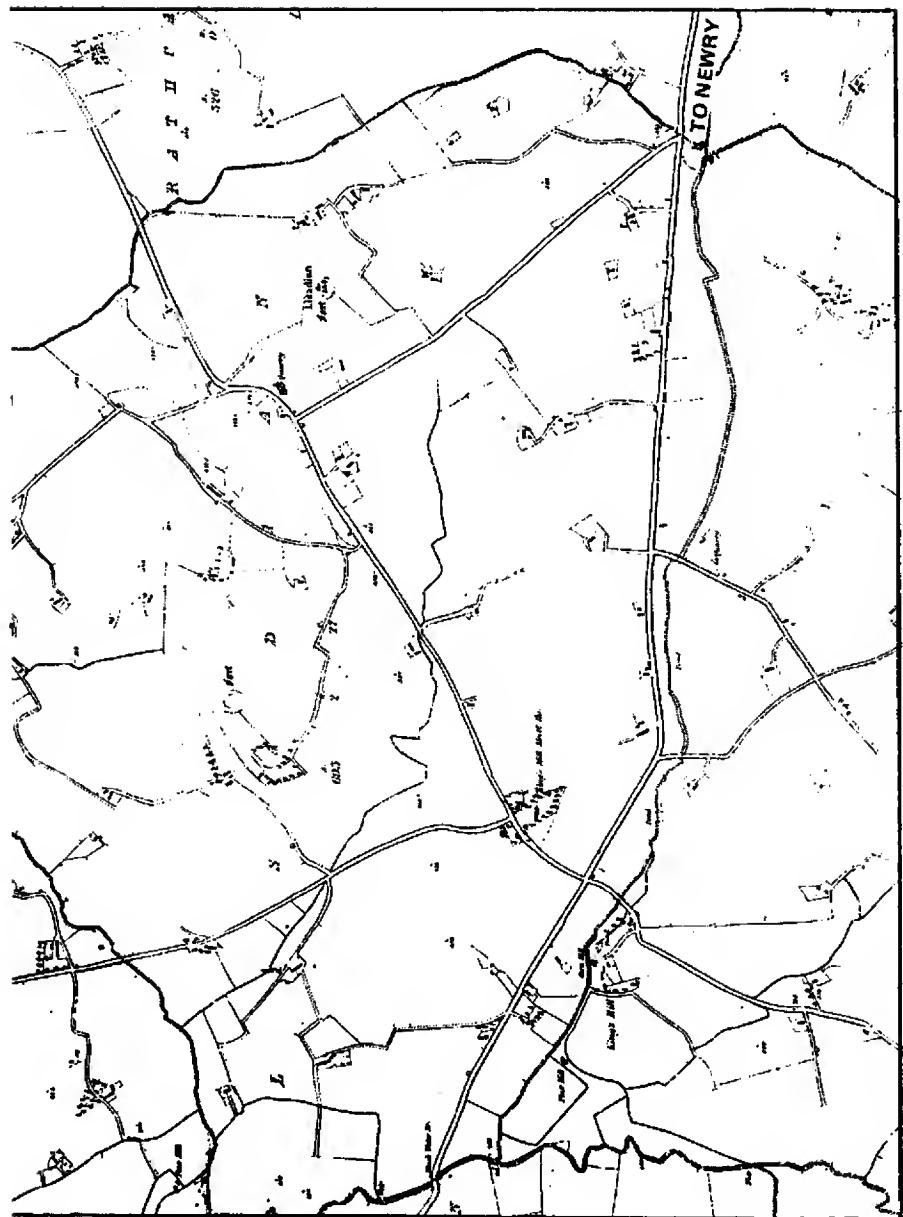
Below is a list of the expenses incurred in the building :

	£	s	d
Mudwork and plastering	3	8	3
Roofing	1	14	1½
Thatching and straw	2	5	6
Door and leaded windows	11	4½	
 Total	7	19	3

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP OF 1835

ARMAGH, SHEET 21





*Map showing King's Mill and the area to the north.*

Crown Copyright Reserved

The landlord built the house for his tenant but it was up to the tenant to maintain it. If he proved himself to be a good tenant the landlord very often gave him the materials free. The houses were kept neat and tidy and the only luxuries of the time were things like fancy cups and plates which would have been displayed in a dresser. According to Mr. Ferguson, the Curate of Ballymoyer, the neatness and comfort varied according to the religious persuasions of the owners — “the superior industry and orderly conduct of the Protestant settlers of all denominations being eminently superior”.

In 1816 there were 37 Presbyterian families, 17 of the Established Church and 179 Roman Catholic living within the Ballymoyer Parish. The Presbyterians spoke with a broad Scottish accent and they differed from their Roman Catholic neighbours in their blunt, forthright attitude which often approached incivility. The people were generally a healthy, hardy race with no local disease prevailing. Many lived to a ripe old age — over eighty and there are instances of some living to above one hundred — “by no means infrequent”, the Curate says. Their appearance on a Sunday at their respective places of worship was decent and comfortable.

The staple diet was potatoes, oaten bread and porridge with milk to drink although most houses would have had a stock of bacon and salt beef as well as cheese and butter, some of which was sold.

Average food prices were :

1 stone potatoes	1½ pence
1 cwt oatmeal	50 pence
1 lb beef	3 pence
1 lb cheese	5 pence
½ gallon milk	1½ pence

The average wage for labourers in 1816 was about 3 pence per day for the whole year round or 8 pence per day for harvest work.

We do not know how much the congregation of Kingsmills were able to pay Rev. Beatty in stipend but no doubt it was quite a good sum. In 1826 they were able to offer Rev. Henry £40.00 per year and he wasn't getting much more than this when he died almost forty years later. This shows us that at the beginning of the nineteenth century people were reasonably well off but this trend did not continue and the standard of living in rural areas declined dramatically in succeeding years.

### Synod Attendance

Once his period of moderatorship was ended, Mr. Beatty's attendances at the Synod meetings became very infrequent. He

attended one in Armagh in 1799 with the elder, John Best. Two years later, he was called before the meeting in Banbridge and asked to produce reasons for his absences. We are told that "these being heard were sustained".

There is little evidence of attendances at these annual meetings over the next number of years. On 7th July 1818, Mr. Beatty failed to arrive for the Synod meeting in Cookstown, but did arrive for the third session the following day. He was asked to explain reasons for his absence and was admonished to attend more punctually in future. This didn't seem to make any difference because he had more explanations to give for absences at the 1823 meeting. John Gourley from Divernagh attended that meeting with him as the representative elder.

It is not known why he failed to attend so many of these important meetings and there are no records whatsoever of his ministry within the church. By 1825, there was great dissatisfaction with him and he was suspended by the Synod for intemperance. This was by no means an unusual occurrence for unfortunately the misuse of alcohol was a great problem among both clergy and laity at the time.

In September that year, aged sixty one, he preached for the last time in the church and settled into early retirement in the house where he had lived since coming to Kingsmills. He might have made some money giving tuition to local boys who wanted to better their education. This very often provided useful income to those who had succumbed to the evil of alcohol.

It is thought that in his retirement he was responsible for writing two theological pamphlets which were published in 1830. These were entitled, "The Glory of the Redeemer Vindicated" and "The Arian and Socinian Confuted". When he died on 22nd December 1832 his property passed to his servant Sinclair. The Sinclairs farmed this land for the next one hundred years, raising the house which was the first manse. It is still standing although it is now derelict.

Mr. Beatty was buried at the north end of the Church and a large flat stone with a brief inscription was placed over the grave. It reads — *"This monument was erected by the congregation of Kingsmills to the memory of their late pastor the Rev. Wm. Beatty who died December 22nd, 1832 aged 68 years. He was forty years their minister".* Another inscription to the first minister is found above the porch door. Here we find the date 1788 and underneath the initials J. B. — the year in which the Church was built and its first minister.



*The inscription above the door of the porch.*

## CHAPTER 5

# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. A. HENRY

Rev. Alexander Henry (1826 - 1863)

On the suspension of Mr. Beatty, a new minister was sought for the Church and on the 27th June 1826, Alexander Henry was ordained. He was the third son of a farmer of the same name from Sandholes outside Cookstown.

Alexander had been born in the townland of Gortygannon in November 1793. When he was twenty one years old he travelled to Scotland to study at the United Seceders Theological Hall in Glasgow. We should remember that travelling such a distance in those times was a far from easy task. A description of what it was like is given in Prof. F. R. G. Holmes "History of the Presbyterian Church". He states that these young men, many of them farmers' sons, would have trudged to Donaghadee from where they would have sailed to Portpatrick. They would have travelled on to Glasgow carrying a sack of oatmeal which would pay for a session's lodgings.

Mr. Henry studied there for five years until 1819. Presumably he came back to Ireland, preaching here and there around the countryside. From information given in Rev. David Stewart's book, "The Seceders in Ireland", we know that Mr. Henry was responsible for the establishment of a church in Seskinore in Co. Fermanagh. In 1824 he was preaching in the Trillick area and one Sunday morning in the month of July when he was passing through the village of Seskinore on his way to preach at Emaroo he was shocked to see a Presbyterian cutting grass. Next Lord's Day he was waited on by three men who requested that the Gospel might be preached in the village. Mr. Henry took the matter up with the Presbytery and they gave him leave to start a mission there. So he went back to the three petitioners and informed them that on the next Sabbath morning, when on his way to Trillick, he would stop off in Seskinore and hold a service, commencing at nine o'clock. A surprisingly large number turned up to hear Mr. Henry and he was very encouraged. From that date onwards, regular meetings were held in the village and a congregation was soon organised as a result of the work started by him.

When he came to Kingsmills the congregation promised to pay him £40.00 per year little realising the difficulty they would have in keeping that promise. Mr. Henry had a huge task in front of him building up a congregation, no doubt disillusioned by the events of that year.



*Divernagh House as it would have been in Rev. A. Henry's time. Some of the buildings at the rear were dwelling houses used by the servants. When the Henry family left the area in the 1880's, Robert Harpur J.P. took over the tenancy and moved from Rathcarbery House. The Harpur family have lived in Divernagh House since, although it has been extensively renovated in recent years.*

He set up home in Divernagh House and leased land from the Wilson estate. As a farmer's son he had a great interest in the land. An account book kept by Wilson's land agent, William Harpur shows that Mr. Henry was one of the largest flax growers in the area in the mid eighteen hundreds. At his death in 1863 he was farming 76 acres in Divernagh. He had eleven tenants living in houses on his land and presumably he employed them all. Some of the names of these were George Greer, Sarah Williamson, Esther Courtney, Mary Irwin, Mary Tague, Robert Moorhead and Alexander and George Thompson.

## The Rebuilding of the Church in 1837

In the 1830's it was evident that the Church was too small to accommodate the people. So it was decided to extend and raise the building to its present size. The work was completed in 1837 and an engraved stone just under the roof at the front of the Church is a memorial to the event. It reads : *"Rebuilt in 1837 and in the 12th year of the Rev. A. Henry".*

The interior was much different to the way we find it now. The pulpit, a simple affair was in the middle of the east wall and there was a row of pews in front of this as well as one row on either side. The seats were of a portable bench type and there was no such thing as seat numbers or a particular pew for individual families. These innovations did not come until the turn of the century. People just came in and sat down wherever they could get a seat. Sometimes this would have been a problem, what with at least two hundred families connected with the Church and very often large numbers within each family. The Church was the focal point of the week. It was an opportunity to meet the neighbours and all the social life of the community revolved around it.

The Church was heated at one end by a large turf fire. We should remember, too, that in the new building of 1837 no space was set aside for an organ or choir area because music was not allowed. The minister, himself, raised the singing of the psalms and if he was fortunate there may have been someone who acted as "precentor". The collection was taken up in ladies, this being the routine until the beginning of this Century when collection plates were introduced.

The exterior walls were whitewashed and the roof was slated. A session house was built around this time and there was a small sexton's house, possibly on the other side of the road. There was a rough path leading up to the Church and a high hedge fenced it off from the roadway outside. The graveyard was a sparse place, more like a field with only the odd headstone and these usually lay flat on top of the graves. It was only the well off people who could afford them. Sadly there are just a few of these still in their original place in the graveyard. Many have been removed and put along the boundary bank and some have been broken. Those who could not afford this type of memorial simply erected a small stone at the head of the grave to mark the plot of a loved one. Inscriptions were rarely used on these.

## Union of Seceders and the General Synod

In 1841 came the Union of the Seceders and the General Synod into what became known as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Kingsmills which had originally

been a member of the Burghers Synod of Armagh now joined sixteen other churches in the area to form the Newry Presbytery.

The sixteen churches were : Tullyallen, Mountnorris, Second Newtownhamilton, First and Second Drumbanagher, Dundalk, First and Second Newry, Cremore, Kilkeel, Mourne, Warrenpoint, Ryans, Annalong, Poyntzpass and Donaghmore.

In the 1840's the Church at Kingsmills was in a thriving state. At least four young men from the congregation were in the process of or had completed their studies for the ministry. Mr. Henry preached in different districts each Sunday evening. In fact he got into some bother when he used the school in Divernagh for Sabbath worship. (See page 65).

### Problems on the Land

In the 1830's and 1840's farming was going through a very rough time. Poor weather was a big factor and it made the work on the land very difficult. During these years, the potato harvest, then the staple crop, dropped drastically. The seed did not grow.

In 1837 there were two drifting snow storms which filled up the roads, making them impassible. Then it turned very wet. Grain prices rose with oats selling at between 15 and 17 shillings (75 pence and 85 pence) per barrel — a comparatively high price. 1838 was also cold and wet and again there was crop failure in the damp and heavy soils.

1839 was another very wet year and there were accompanying high winds. The night of the 5th January became known as the "Night of the Big Wind". A tempest raged throughout the whole of Britain. Hurricane winds stripped houses of their roofs, stacks of grain and hay were blown away and snow followed before the fodder could be collected. Damage was immense. According to Donaldson's "Account of the Barony of the Upper Fews" a multitude of timber trees were uprooted throughout the country. In the demesne at Ballymoyer alone, at least three thousand of them were blown down. There was a great loss of life on both sea and land.

These lean years affected all the tenants but it was the small farmer and cottier (labourer) who found it most difficult to make ends meet. Paying the rent to the landlord was a big problem in these times.

Thomas Wilson had appointed William Harpur from Lisadian House as his land agent for the estate here. He was a most unpopular man among the people, especially those who had difficulty paying their rent. Many were evicted and with the depressed state of the countryside there was nothing to do but emigrate or try to find work in some of the nearby towns. It would not be fair, however, to judge William Harpur too harshly.

The following letter dated April 1839 from a Mr. Barry (who supervised the land agents for Wilson) to William Harpur shows us that he was only doing his job when he carried out these evictions.

**J. Barry to William Harpur, Lisadian, Co. Armagh**

My dear William, I take this large sheet of paper to write to you on, as I find I have a great deal to say to you, and in the first place to thank you for your letter of the 16th received this morning. In the first place I approve of your serving the notices you speak of, and send you my signature on blank paper in the way you desire. At the same time I wish to say that neither Mr. Wilson or myself would wish to eject any decent honest man, who may have fallen into arrear from misfortune and unforeseen circumstances, but the idle and ill-conducted we have no sympathy for, and while we would cherish and assist the honest and industrious man, we would wish to get rid of the opposite character with as little delay as possible. I need not say more on this subject, as in our last conversation you had my views fully expressed to you, and I know what I then told you was fully sanctioned by Mr. Wilson. He has acted upon that principle on his Armagh Estate, and wishes as far as in his power to carry the same principle into effect upon the Lisadian and Drumheriff property; now this can only be done by time and prudence, and as long as I am so far from you, I beg you will miss no opportunity (and immediately advise me of it when it offers) of getting rid of the pauper and cottier tenantry which abound upon this estate. Mr. Wilson to accomplish this would willingly sacrifice some money, and although he has paid for the arrears on the estate, he would cheerfully forgive the arrears, and allow the tenants surrendering to carry away his stock and crop, provided he gave up his holding at November next. Mr. Wilson has no wish to introduce new tenants on the property, when a farm is surrendered or the tenant ejected, his invariable practice has been to give the farm to some honest and industrious man who is on the estate already, or to divide it amongst the neighbouring tenants if they are proper people. I told you when at the Assizes in Armagh, that I did not think it prudent to give encouragement to the cottiers and other under-tenants holding small patches of land, and therefore that I would not consent to give them lime, or encourage them in the same way by assistance of any kind, that I would do the other tenants; this kind of conduct towards them, I was convinced, was the more necessary, from what you told me yourself, that since Mr. Wilson became the owner of the estate, these people considered their holdings more valuable, and the greater indulgences they received, the more difficult it would be to get rid of them; therefore they must be discouraged and got rid of (without harshness as Mr. Wilson would not sanction that mode of treatment) with as little delay as possible. All the persons you mention I would serve with notice; they are defaulters in their

rents, and therefore it is necessary to show them that, he that does not pay cannot be permitted to hold his land.

It is now time to consider before bringing the ejectment, who ought to be put out; you can fill the names upon the blank paper I sign and now send to you, and if there are any others more than you mention in the description alluded to by me in the former part of this letter (cottiers and smallholders) who you think might be got rid of at the latter end of the year, partly by compulsion and partly by kindness, I would serve them also. Mr. Boyd I find received more of the arrears of 1834 and the May rent of 1835 than was returned to me; this occurs in consequence of his receiving money after he sent me a return of what was due, but I have written to him about it, and it will be easily settled between us; get Boyle to pay the balance of his rents. If he wishes to hold this is indispensable, as the rent now due was struck by Mr. Wilson himself and any attempt to reduce it before he receives Richmond's return it would appear as a collusion on the part of Boyle and others to coerce him into an abatement.

As I am about settling my accounts I wish you would return to me the account of the lime as also the expense of the planting and ditching about all the clumps, the thorn quicks and all other expenses which you have incurred with regard to the estate; this I want as soon as you can send it to me as I cannot make out the accounts without it believe me dear William Your faithful friend . . . .

P.S. Hinin sent a letter to Mr. Wilson which he sent to me and tell him (Hinin) there is no use in writing to Mr. Wilson when he does not pay his rent; out he must go unless his rent is paid.

4p. Signed. Add<sup>d</sup>. "Mr. William Harpur Lisadian, c/o The Postmaster Mountnorris near Newry.

In the 1840's it became far more difficult to make a living on the land, even in this area, which was not nearly so badly affected as in the South. The corn stalks were so short that the crop could not be cut. Instead it was pulled and threshed with the root still on. It is said that some people died as a result of eating these rough oats which contained so much soil and dirt. One member of Kingsmills sent a man out to dig her enough potatoes for a Christmas dinner, saying she would give him a goose if he could get some. The story has it that he dug all day and got only one potato and no goose. Flax prices soared as farmers turned to this crop when seed potatoes became unavailable. Rev. Henry paid £8 for four barrels of flax in 1847 and five years later he was paying fifty per cent more for the same amount. Things were so bad that many saw it as God's punishment on the people for their sins. On the 2nd December 1845, the Newry Presbytery met to discuss the situation. Owing to what they saw as the "sad prevalence of sin in our land and the awful threatenings of

divine judgment" they called for a special fast to be observed in each congregation on the last day of the old year and the first day of the new one.

Relief work was set up in 1847 to help give people money to buy food. Men were put on the roads with picks and shovels and expected to straighten and level them. It was at this time that the road from Lisnalea to the Church underwent much change. This was a very hilly road and many of these hills were removed manually during this period of poverty. These men were paid by "chit" — a slip of paper with an allowance for a certain amount of groceries. These could then be exchanged in any shop.

The opening of the linen mill in Bessbrook also helped to alleviate the poverty of the time and was a welcome diversion in the locality, despite the fact that it drew a number of families away from the area and so from the Church.

At the 1857 visitation to Kingsmills it was noted with regret that the stipend paid to the minister had fallen in the previous three years. The congregation were not now giving the amount required to qualify for the receipt of the Regium Donum. No doubt the drop in stipend was a direct result of the lean years in the 1840's. The following year Mr. Henry made a statement to the Presbytery saying that he was most anxious to have it entered upon the minutes that he no longer held the congregation of Kingsmills bound to pay either to him or his heirs £40 annually, the amount promised in 1826. This seems to have been a very fair move by Mr. Henry, realising the problems of the time, though it must be said that with a farm of over 70 acres he was in no way reliant on the stipend. Still the Presbytery strongly advised that the stipend should be brought up to at least £35 so that should Mr. Henry be removed from them by death or otherwise, his successor should be entitled to receive the Regium Donum.

### The Latter Years in Mr. Henry's Ministry

By the end of the 1850's, Kingsmills was the third largest congregation in the Newry Presbytery. It had two hundred families, Donaghmore had 220 families and Mourne, 450 families. The stipend had increased from £29 in 1854 to £36 in 1858. In 1859 it had gone up to £40. We could say that number wise Kingsmills had reached its peak in the fifties. In June 1856, to cope with almost 400 communicants a new set of sacramental vessels were bought. These consisted of 4 silver cups, 2 silver decanters and 4 silver plates. These were in use for almost one hundred years until individual glasses were bought in 1951.

From 1860 onwards there was a continual decline in numbers. In the ten year period leading up to 1870 the congregation lost about sixty families — over one quarter of its number. The loss was in no way a reflection on Mr. Henry or his preaching. In fact

it had nothing to do with the Church at all. Instead it had to do with a shift in population towards the village of Bessbrook which was expanding rapidly at this time under the Richardson family.

### Bessbrook's Growth and Kingsmills' Decline

The village of Bessbrook can trace its origins to the mid eighteenth century. In 1761, in the townland of Cloughervan, a man named John Pollock opened a bleach green and carried on a small linen business. Cloughervan, like many of the other townlands in that area, was owned by the Earl of Charlemont. Pollock had married a Miss Elizabeth Carlile from Newry and it is thought that the "Bess" in the name of the village refers to her Christian name while the house the Pollocks lived in was near to Camlough River or "brook". The earliest reference to the word "Bessbrook" is in an entry in the Baptismal Register of the Presbyterian Church in Newry reading, *"Bess, daughter of James Pollock Esq. of Bessbrook, Linen draper, baptized 24th July 1779"*. This child was a granddaughter of John and Elizabeth Pollock.

Pollock carried on a thriving business and in 1802, his son, William, leased the property to Joseph Nicholson and Sons, who continued to expand. The first power flax spinning mill was installed during their time in Bessbrook. They spun the yarn and gave it out to be woven in the homes of the local people. As well as this they installed some hand looms of their own in the 1830's, but they were mainly spinners.

In 1839 disaster struck when the entire mill was destroyed by fire. The property lay idle until 1845 when the Richardson family took it over. They developed the hand loom weaving section of the linen industry, both in the cottages and on their premises.

The Richardsons had come to County Armagh from Warwickshire during the reign of James I. One member of the family became convinced of Quaker principles and it was his descendants who developed Bessbrook and set up the social experiment of 1845. John Grubb Richardson, one of the founder brothers said — "From childhood I was strongly impressed with the duty we owe to God in looking after the welfare of those around us . . . . I had long resolved that we should have a temperance population in our little colony . . . .".

He looked on Bessbrook not only as a place in which to work but also as a place in which to live. If people had better living standards then they would be contented workers. He saw strong drink as being the root of all sorts of problems and he banned it from the village. Without a public house, he believed there would

be no need for a Police Station or a pawn shop. As the village began to expand in the 1850's, the Presbyterian Community of ninety three families (407 individuals) asked the Newry Presbytery to appoint a Committee to inquire into their circumstances and to see if they could be incorporated into a congregation. Of the ninety three families five of them were connected with Kingsmills Church. This request was made in February 1853 and almost immediately a Commission was set up by the Presbytery to look for suitable accommodation for a Church in the village.

Mr. Henry from Kingsmills was one of the ministers in charge of this project and by the end of the year the building was complete. Bessbrook's first minister, Rev. Thomas Cromie was ordained a year later but in the intervening time Mr. Henry frequently preached to the congregation.

The 1860's with the American Civil War, brought boom years in the linen trade. Around seven hundred houses were built between 1845 and 1887 and the estimated population of the village in that year was 3,500. In 1884 the electric tramway was constructed between Bessbrook and Newry, making it easier for travelling and trade.

So from the mid nineteenth century, life in the country areas around Bessbrook was changing. The opportunity of steady employment and good well laid out modern housing was a big incentive to the farm labourers and their families. The social life was also important. The Richardsons built schools, playing fields, a town hall and an institute as well as starting many welfare schemes.

Among those who settled in Bessbrook during this period were a large number of families from the area around Kingsmills especially those who lived to the east of the Church. Among those sixty families who disappeared from the congregation between 1860 and 1870 were the Greers, Autersons, Browns, McCullas, McCulloughs, Kernaghans, Pauls, Adams, Barrons and Quas. Many of these names still live on in the Bessbrook area. In the 1890's, three families who lived right beside each other in Lisadian gave up their tenancy and went to work in Bessbrook Mill — Stewart McIlroy, Samuel Cordner and William Cowser.

### The '59 Revival

So at the end of his days Mr. Henry was seeing big changes in the area. Apart, however, from the drift to Bessbrook there was an even greater change taking place province wide. This was the spiritual change in the lives of many people in Ulster as a result of what has become known as the "1859 Revival". Over the

whole country side there was a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit with the result that a vast number of people became convinced of their sin and were converted. Church attendance greatly increased and special evangelistic meetings were held in many areas. The Newry Presbytery organised such meetings in that year and in November they expressed their "gratitude to Almighty God for an abundant outpouring of His Holy Spirit" upon many of the congregations in its care. No doubt this revival was experienced in Kingsmills as elsewhere. Towards the end of the year a Total Abstinence Society was formed in the church to try to counteract the evils of alcohol.

### Visitation by Presbytery 1862

By 1862, Mr. Henry's health was failing. He was suffering from one of the most prevalent diseases of the time — Tuberculosis. Almost seventy years old, he had dedicated a life time of work to the one congregation. Despite the delicate state of his health he was able to preach at the Visitation of Presbytery in July of that year. He took as his text the words of Luke 12 : 40 — "You must also be ready for the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him".

The Presbytery expressed their satisfaction with the diligence and faithfulness of Mr. Henry in the discharge of his ministerial duties. The four elders, George McCullough from Tullywinney, Mark Patterson, Lurgana, William Dillon, Tullyhappy and James Gray, Lisadian took a lot of the burden of work from Mr. Henry. They held meetings in their own districts for prayer and Bible Study as well as visiting the sick and overseeing the Sabbath School.

The Presbytery found the Church in a flourishing state. Attendances at public worship were good and there was no debt connected with the property. Furthermore there was a good increase in the financial support of the ministry and missions. The only criticism was in regard to the secular and spiritual education of the young. Sunday School, operating only in the Summer months was poorly attended and the Church was asked to take immediate steps to reorganise it and bring it into a more efficient and flourishing condition. They also recommended the establishment of a day school in connection with the Church.

By the Spring of 1863, Mr. Henry's health had declined further and he asked that the congregation have leave to call an assistant or successor. He died on the 8th November before this request could be implemented and was buried outside the north wall of the Church beside the grave of his predecessor, Mr. Beatty. A marble headstone was erected to his memory which reads :

*"In memory of a beloved pastor, Rev. Alexander Henry,  
for thirty seven years minister of this congregation.  
He was born at Gortygannon, Co. Tyrone, November 1793  
Ordained to pastoral charge of Kingsmills 1826  
Died at residence, Divernagh November 8th 1863  
To his people he devoted all the powers of mind of great  
energy and singleness of purpose. A man faithful in all  
things in the Church over which his Master had made  
him overseer.  
He walked humbly with his God and in peace with all men".*

At the top of the stone there is a carving of a dog with a crown above it and the inscription — *"Deus est neus Pastor"* i.e. "God is our Father".



*The north gable of the Church where the first two ministers were buried. On the left is a large flat stone erected to the Rev. Beatty and on the right is a more ornate headstone to the Rev. Henry.*

### **The Henry Family**

In 1836, ten years after coming to Kingsmills, Mr. Henry had married a Miss Anne Jane Stuart, whose father John farmed outside Dundalk. They apparently had a large family — some say there were eleven sons. Whether or not this is true we don't know

but there were certainly five. An obituary notice in "The Witness" December 1887 reads as follows :

*"Henry — Dec 4th 1881, suddenly at his residence, Whitehaven, England, Emerson Wilson Henry Esq., M.D., M.Ch. of blood poison contracted in the performance of his professional duties, 5th son of the late Rev. Alex Henry of Divernagh House near Newry in his 36th year. His remains will be interred today (Friday) in the Borough Cemetery, Whitehaven".*

This son had studied at Queen's University from where he graduated in 1866. He settled down in Whitehaven in Cumberland where he continued in practice until his death. Like his father he was noted for his frankness and generosity. He was the honorary acting surgeon of the Whitehaven Rifle Volunteers and on his death they wished to give him a military funeral but it was thought that he would not have wanted any such display.

Another son Alexander gained a Master of Arts and a Law Degree and was for a time Recorder of Carlisle.

A third son, William Jennett Henry was a civil engineer and he seems to have been involved in the linen industry. In the late 1860's he married a local girl, Elizabeth Longhead, whose mother was employed on William Harpur's estate at Lisadian. They went to live at Duneight House near Hillsborough where there was a big bleachworks and a corn mill. He also owned property in High Street and Skipper Street in Belfast concerned with the linen trade.

The 1862 visitation of Presbytery shows that Mr. Henry also had a son studying for the ministry but no trace can be found of him in church records. Mrs. Henry died on 26th June 1867 at Divernagh. She was probably buried beside her husband in Kingsmills but there is no mention on the grave stone.

Despite extensive enquiries it has been impossible to trace any of the Henry descendants.

### **Education in the Area in Mr. Henry's Time**

Sir Charles Coote in his survey of Co. Armagh, drawn up in the years 1802 - 1803, stated that in regard to education "the youth of the county have the advantages of a better education than in most parts of Ireland". This was no doubt as a result of the vast number of small 'hedge' schools which existed at the time.

Up until the Education Act 1831 there was no system of education in Ireland. If a man had a wish to set up a school he was perfectly at liberty to do so. Others were organised by various charities or societies interested in improving the education of the young and some of the more caring landlords would have

paid a man to come and teach his tenant's children. This was true of the Copes, the Gosfords and indeed the Wilsons. So education was a very haphazard affair with it being left up to individual families how or where they educated their young. The Kingsmills folk must have taken full advantage of whatever education was available for examination of the earliest marriage registers in the 1840's show that most of them could sign their name whereas registers for some other neighbouring churches show that many just put an 'X'.

In 1826 an inquiry was set up by the "Commissioners of Irish Education" to see just what was going on throughout the country. They published the figures and these are the earliest reliable records we have for schools in this area.

Certainly there were plenty of them and no one could use distance as an excuse for not attending school. It is interesting to look at the information obtained by the Commissioners for this immediate area. Below is a summary of each school in this district.

**Lisadian** — This was held in a thatched cabin and a Presbyterian man called Robert Graham was the master. The cabin was apparently situated where the present manse now stands on land which the Wilsons called the School House Farm. The school received no financial help and Mr. Graham's annual income of £10 was as a result of fees paid by over forty pupils (nearly all Presbyterians) who attended the school. Replying to a query about whether or not the scriptures were taught or read in the school, it was stated that the Authorised Version was used.

**Divernagh** — Here Hugh Ross, a Protestant of the Established Church (i.e. Church of Ireland) held a school in what was described as a good building. He earned £12 per year teaching 29 Presbyterians and 6 Roman Catholics. They also read the Authorised Version of the Bible.

**Lisnalee** — This was held in a 'good' school house valued at £80. There were over seventy pupils on the roll, half of whom were Presbyterians. The master, William Stringer, received £30 - £40 per year for tuition.

**Tullyhappy** — This school was held in a place called "Blacker's Barn". It was described as a 'middling' school house built at a cost of £15 by the Kildare-Place Society — a charitable organisation. John Gorman, a Protestant of the Established Church earned £11-5-6 teaching on average 34 Presbyterians, 9 Church of Ireland and 2 Roman Catholics.

**Maytown** — This must have held the record for being the smallest school in the country for sixteen children (mostly Presbyterians) were taught in a six foot square building described as "in a bad state". It was also unusual in that it had a female teacher — Mary Curry. She only earned £4 per year.

**Keadymore** — A “waste hovel” was how the Commissioners described the building and it was run by William Thompson. He earned £8 per year teaching about twenty five pupils — mostly Presbyterians.

**Coramenan (Carrowmannon)** — A school was held in a thatched cabin which had been built by subscription. A Roman Catholic man called Peter Deighan taught about fifty children, twelve of whom were Presbyterians and they read the Authorised Version of the Bible.

**Baleek** — This school was run by the Association for Discountenancing Vice. They provided some finance for a good building but most of the money (£200) was given by Lord Gosford. The school master, John Stringer, a Protestant of the Established Church received an annual income of £30 from the Association, part of which was supplied by Lord Gosford. No Presbyterians attended this school.

**Upper Cregins (Creggans)** — Robert Boyd who classed himself as a Protestant held a school for twenty five children — sixteen of the established Church, four Presbyterians and five Roman Catholics.

**Greyhilla** — Tully Boyle, a Roman Catholic had a school in what was described as “a comfortable house”. The forty eight pupils attending were charged up to 5 pence per week. Only seven of them were Presbyterians.

**Lisdrumwher (Lisdrumchor)** — In 1826 there were two schools here. One was run by a man called George Allen who described himself as of independent religion. He taught thirty nine children, thirty three of whom were Presbyterians. His salary was £19 per year — a good income in comparison to many at the time.

The other school was not yet built but a Dr. Stewart had given an acre of land and he was to contribute £2 per year towards the teacher's salary. Robert Davison, a Presbyterian was to be the first master.

**Aswara (Eshwary)** — Over twenty children, only a few of whom were Presbyterians, were taught by a Roman Catholic man called James Montgomery. They paid 5 pence per month for fees.

The Commissioners reported a very disjointed picture of education throughout the country and it was as a result of this that the Education Act of 1831 was passed. It set up National Schools under a board which was to be half Catholic and half Protestant. The government was to build the schools and pay the teachers. Each religion would send its own ministers to give religious instruction. However, what was put down on paper did not work in practice. There were struggles between the two religious groups and many schools came under either Protestant or Roman Catholic management, depending on the area in which they were situated.

Over the years three National Schools were built in this district — one at Carrickgallogly (31 pupils) managed by the Established Church, one at Tullyheron (45 pupils) managed by the Roman Catholic Church and a third at Lisdrumchor (48 pupils) managed by the Presbyterians.

The schools at Lisnalea and Divernagh were taken over by the Church Education Society of the Established Church.

Divernagh operated under this organisation from 5th September 1844. At that time the master was a Mr. George Rolston and the school had books for one hundred children. Rev. Henry held Sunday services in the school in the 1840's but this was not welcomed by some in the area. One August night the building was entered and all the school tablets (slates) and other items were carried off. A threatening notice was served on Mr. Henry for being connected with such a school. This caused a great uproar with the Commissioners and the Manager of the school was informed that the school house must not be used for public worship on Sundays or indeed any other day of the week. If this rule was not observed the school would be struck off the roll and the salary withdrawn. So that seemed to put an end to Mr. Henry's preaching in Divernagh School.

By 1850, William Conn had taken over as Principal. He was a Presbyterian and he was married to a daughter of William Gourley, a member of Kingsmills. Mr. Conn joined Kingsmills and was considered for the eldership of the Church but he appears to have transferred to Bessbrook around 1860.

Figures for the year ending 1862 show that there were 149 children attending the school in Divernagh — 90 Presbyterians, 29 Roman Catholics and 30 from the Established Church. They received Religious instruction from Monday to Friday for one hour each morning and on a Saturday they had three hours Bible instruction from 10.00 a.m. until 1.00 p.m. All pupils used the Authorised Version of the Scriptures and the three denominations were taught from their own catechisms. Those pupils who were unable to read were asked simple Bible questions for ten minutes each morning, Monday to Friday and for one hour on Saturday.

The school in Divernagh kept going until Mr. Conn found he could no longer manage. He died in 1891 aged seventy four and was buried in Kingsmills.

**Lisadian School** — Lisadian school seems to have got into a bad state of repair by the mid nineteenth Century. It had never been taken over by any charitable group and what money the local farmers had was being ploughed back into the land. When Divernagh was upgraded in 1844 many of the young people from the Lisadian area were sent there for a better education. However, it seems that a new school was built at Kingsmills in or around

1848 and all expenses incurred were paid by Thomas Wilson, the landlord. It was erected where the present manse now stands. Twenty nine loads of sand costing twelve shillings (60 pence) were drawn from Mullaghglass by Allen Auterson. Sam Adams' old house which was at the school house entrance gate was levelled and eight local women got 2½ pence each for weeding among the shrubs around the school house. Mr. Wilson paid the school master £6-5-0 per quarter and provided the paper, quills and pencils which were needed.

In the 1850's a night class was held here as well. It was conducted by a man called Belshaw and it was aimed at providing education for those adults who wished to improve their knowledge. There was also one held in the Cottage about the same time. It was called a "SPELLING B" and at this particular class the local young men got some training in the operation of mechanised farm machinery. This was also financed by the Wilsons.

## CHAPTER 6

# NINETEENTH CENTURY LANDLORDS IN THIS AREA

As we have seen earlier, the families who held this land at the time the Church was built were the Hawkshaws, Wilsons and Synotts.

In this Chapter we will follow them through the nineteenth Century until their lands were bought up by the Government around 1905.

### **The Hawkshaws**

When William Hawkshaw died around 1830 the lands in Divernagh and Rathcarbery passed to his son John Stewart Hawkshaw. He was born in 1798 and was for many years an active soldier. As well as serving with the British troops in the West Indies he also saw fighting in France, Egypt and the Peninsular Wars. By 1819 he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. On leaving the Army we are told that he became a "useful country gentleman", settling at Blaris Lodge, Lisburn. He was known to have been a very upright and fair minded landlord. One of his fellow Officers writing about him after his death said — "His end was calm and peaceful, resting in the merits and atonement of his Saviour for salvation. Nor was his faith manifested only on a deathbed but was exhibited in many years in his later life, in reading the Word of God to the poor, sick and dying cottagers around his residence and cheering many a fainting heart by pointing the sinner to the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the world".

Lieutenant Colonel Hawkshaw died around 1860 but as his only son had predeceased him in infancy and his daughter Eleanora was unmarried the estate was sold. Joseph Wilson, the neighbouring landlord bought the estate in 1861. Eleanora Hawkshaw died in 1907 in Dublin and she was buried in the family vault in Lisburn Cathedral. She left large sums of money to various religious and hospital charities.

### **The Wilsons**

The history of our Church could not be written without reference to the Wilson family from Dublin. In terms of the landed

gentry, they were not particularly important or influential, owning just over four thousand acres of land in 1860. But the Kingsmills people were privileged to have the support of this family for over a hundred years.

The Wilsons can be traced back to the beginning of the seventeen hundreds when Benjamin Wilson, a Quaker, was farming in King's County (now Co. Offaly). He also owned a large estate in Philadelphia, U.S.A. amounting to over 1,000 acres. The family were involved in business in Dublin in the years that followed. A street directory for Dublin in 1783 shows a number of Wilsons, all thought to be from the one family and involved in a variety of trades including wax chandling, ironmongery and carpet manufacturing. Some were also goldsmiths. In the early 1800's they were also involved in rope, flax and hemp manufacturing.

When Richard Wilson a descendant of Benjamin bought the land in Lisadian and Drumherriff in 1777 he was a Presbyterian and as we have seen earlier he made two acres of land available for the people to build a Church. He most likely helped with the finance as well.

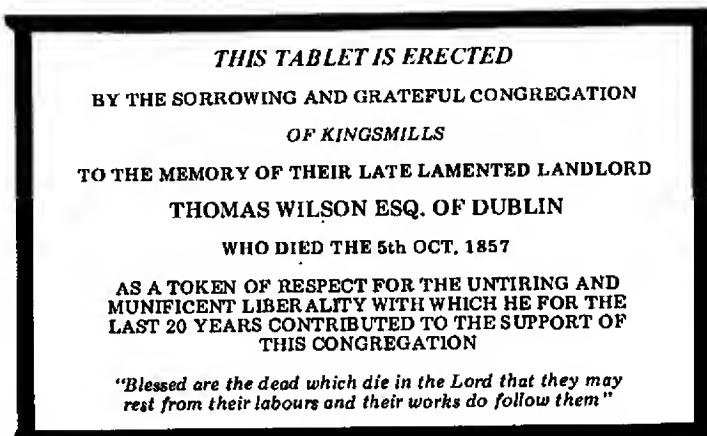
Twenty years later, the land had been inherited by Joseph Wilson a close relative though not a son of Richard Wilson because he came to Ireland from Philadelphia as an American Consul. He came to live in Dublin and was in the carpet manufacturing trade at Ormond Quay. Joseph seems to have been a very Godly man and when he died in 1809 he left large sums of money to the Strand Street and Usher's Quay congregations in Dublin. Thomas, who inherited the property on the death of his father had also strong Christian principles. He took a great interest in the Lisadian estate and throughout his life he was a generous subscriber to Church funds in Kingsmills. He also saw to it that his tenants' children received a reasonable standard of education. He paid a school master to teach them and provided the necessary building and materials that were required. He was very keen for the people to progress and make the most of what they had got but he appears to have had little sympathy with those who had little ambition or who just could not get on.

### The Cottage

Around 1840, Thomas decided to build a summer residence at Lisadian. He chose a splendid site about two hundred yards from the Church, looking away to the hills. It was built in Elizabethan style and although it was referred to as the 'Cottage' it was, in fact, a large two storey dwelling with cellars underneath and garrets at the top. During his life the family seems to have used it a great deal. When they were in residence they worshipped in the Church and had their own seat. It still bears a brass plate on which is written "*Joseph Wilson D L, Westbury, Stillorgan, Dublin*". This man was a son of Thomas.

Thomas had a very large family. He was married twice and there were fourteen children — seven boys and seven girls. When he died on 5th October 1857 the two sons from his first marriage inherited most of his property. Joseph was given the Armagh estate. As well as Lisadian and Drumherriff it also included land at Lisnadill. Robert inherited valuable land in the West Indies. In his will, Thomas left £21 to his agent, William Harpur as a "token of his friendship and regard" and he also left a large sum of money to Strand Street Presbyterian Church in Dublin.

Shortly after his death the congregation of Kingsmills erected a tablet to his memory.



### Joseph Wilson

Soon after inheriting the Armagh estate, Joseph added to its size, when he bought land from the adjoining Hawkshaw property in Rathcarbery and Divernagh.

In 1888 he signed an official agreement leasing the two acres of Church property to the Trustees of Kingsmills. Prior to this there had never been any such document.

Joseph Wilson is listed in the "County Families of the United Kingdom" as having been educated in Trinity College, Dublin where he gained a B.A. degree in 1839. He was also a Deputy Lieutenant for Co. Armagh and he had residences at Lisnadill, Armagh; Westbury, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin; and 15 Upper Temple Street, Dublin.

He continued to support Kingsmills financially but the Wilson family were not such frequent visitors to the Cottage. In the 1870's a family which included army officers rented the Cottage. They were very keen on shooting and they used to fire live bullets

from the hill at the Cottage across to Todd's plantation opposite. On one occasion a young boy from Kingsmills was seriously injured in the head by a bullet and he spent the rest of his life mentally retarded.

Mr. Meeke's parents, brother and sister took up permanent residence in the cottage in 1875 when they moved from Garvaghy and Thomas Elliott started off married life in it in the late 1880's.

### The End of the Wilson Era

Like his father, Joseph Wilson was twice married and he had two sons, Joseph and Claude. The latter often visited the Lisadian estate and looked after the interests of his ageing father. When the father died in 1898, for some strange reason there was no outright beneficiary. The Armagh lands were divided among four children — Claude, Joseph and two of their sisters. What happened the land in the following seven years, leading up to 1905 when the tenants bought it, is not known. Certainly it wasn't sold but in 1905 the landlord, from whom the tenants purchased the property was called James Harrington Wilson. Although born in the City of Dublin he was then living in the village of Clifden, Co. Galway where he was a Justice of the Peace and a landlord. The strange thing was that he was a Roman Catholic. At this time there was not a trace of either Claude or Joseph Wilson so whether they died or moved away, we cannot say. But the "Presbyterian Wilsons" from Dublin who had done so much for Kingsmills and the surrounding area had vanished without trace.

### The Synotts

Unlike the Wilsons on the neighbouring estate, the Synotts settled down in Ballymoyer House which Walter had built in 1782 and they played a leading role in the life of Co. Armagh throughout the nineteenth Century.

In 1830 Walter's son, Marcus built a new wing on the House, probably to accommodate his large family of nine children. He was known to be a very firm but fair landlord laying down strict rules for his tenants in regard to what they could or could not do with the land. If they were caught selling turf there was a severe penalty. His agent was John Donaldson who lived in Lurgana.

Marcus died in 1855 leaving his eldest son of the same name to inherit the property. He became a Justice of the Peace and a Deputy Lieutenant for Co. Armagh. When he died childless in 1874 the estates devolved on his brother, Mark Seton Synott. On his death in 1890 his son, also Mark Seton inherited the property. He was Captain of the Armagh Light Infantry and he never married. This meant that when he died the eldest of his eight sisters was the next of kin. Mary Susanna Synott had married an English Army General, called Arthur Fitzroy Hart. He had been

in the army for almost forty years and looked forward to retiring to Ballymoyer. In 1902 they assumed by Royal Licence, the surname and arms of Synott, thus the estate became known as "Hart-Synotts". The locals all turned out to give General Arthur Fitzroy Harry Synott a great welcome when he returned from his last campaign in the Boer War. It wasn't long until he got to work on his new estate. He rose at 7 o'clock each morning — summer and winter and was busy with axe and spade, not only directing his men, but working as hard as any of them. Everyone got to know him well and he gained their respect during the eight years when he worked among them. Then in April 1910 he took ill and died suddenly. The whole countryside turned out to walk behind the gun carriage which took him to his last resting place in the Churchyard at Ballymoyer. He was buried in a grave lined with primroses which the local school children had picked.

The Hart Synotts had four children — two boys and two girls. The eldest son Arthur Henry Seton Hart Synott had a brilliant career in the British Army. He joined the East Surrey Regiment in 1890 and qualified as an interpreter in French, German and Japanese. He also spoke fluent Hindustani, Burmese and Persian. Prior to his involvement in the First World War he was in the North West Frontier Campaign (1897) and the South African War (1899 - 1902). He also served in Japan, Hong Kong and India.

During the Great War he rose to the rank of Brigadier General, fighting with distinction and gaining several medals for bravery. Towards the end of the war he was severely wounded and had both legs amputated.

He had little practical knowledge of the Ballymoyer estate, the lands being transferred to the occupiers between 1902 and 1910. In 1938 he and his brother sold the farmland of the demesne and they gave the avenue and glen to the National Trust. Ballymoyer House, then in a poor state of repair was pulled down.

Descendants of the Synott family now live in the South of England.

### Life in the Kingsmills Area Around 1860

Bassett's Survey of County Armagh (1888) gives us a good insight into what life was like when Mr. Meeke first came to these parts. Whitecross was then the postal address for many of the townlands around Kingsmills because a post office had been set up there. It was run by Deighan Brothers who had connections with Glasgow. They opened up a General store at Whitecross selling practically everything. They had a bakery and up until the beginning of this century the bread was delivered by horse and cart all round the countryside. The farmers also sold Deighans their surplus butter, eggs, fowl and feathers which they shipped to Liverpool. A sample of their bill head is shown overleaf:

<b>DEIGHAN BROTHERS,</b>	
General Merchants,	
<b>15 AITKENHEAD ROAD,</b>	<b>POST OFFICE.</b>
<b>GLASGOW.</b>	<b>WHITECROSS.</b>
<b>DEPARTMENTS:</b>	
Groceries, Provisions, Drapery, Baking, Wines and Spirits.	
Exporters of Butter and Eggs.	

By 1860 many of the smaller tenants had left the area with the result that farms were larger. "Griffiths Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland" in 1864 shows us that the average size of farm around Kingsmills was about eleven acres compared with five acres sixty years earlier. Rev. Henry farmed over 76 acres so this gives us some idea of how big his farm was. Flax was the main crop grown although there were still some oats and potatoes. The number of cows kept was also increased and Whitecross was noted for being a good butter making district. The oats were milled at Scotts of Creggans or Synotts of Ballymoyer and there were eight scutch mills in the district to where the flax could be taken. P. G. Synott was the estate agent for the area and the local blacksmith was a man called Kerton.

There was a police station in Belleek manned by Sergeant John O'Grady and there were also stations in Mountnorris and Camlough — none in Bessbrook or Whitecross. These came about later.

The fairs which in the early part of the Century were held in nearly every village, had died out to some extent and the main centres were now at Camlough and Newtownhamilton. Bassett informs us that the one in Camlough was held on the third Monday of every month it being "usually good for cattle and improving for horses". Camlough then had a population of 190 and Bessbrook 3,500. Belleek consisted of twenty one dwellings which included three public houses.

Travelling had become a lot easier with the advent of railways. Loughgilly was the nearest station and there was also an electric tramway between Newry and Bessbrook.

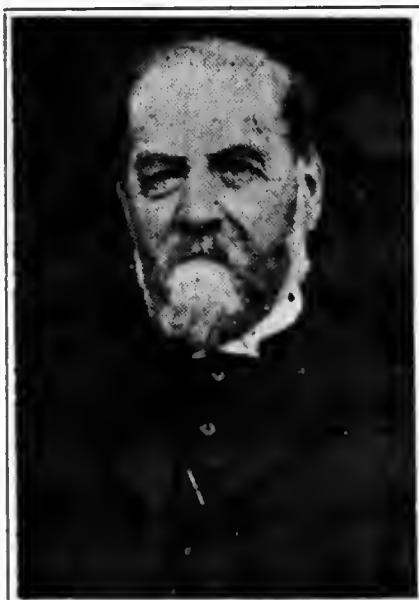
Dr. A. G. Young, who lived where the public house now is in Whitecross, held a surgery in Mountnorris and Ballymoyer and there were three other doctors working in the Bessbrook and Camlough area.

With the coming of the industrial age fewer things were made in the home. Household articles and clothing were now readily obtainable in the several draper shops and general stores around the villages.

So it was into this scene that the Rev. James Meeke arrived in the autumn of 1864 after the Church had been vacant for just over a year.

## CHAPTER 7

# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. J. MEEKE



*Rev. James Meeke, B.A., photographed towards the end of his ministry in Kingsmills.*

### Rev. James Meeke (1864 - 1913)

James Meeke was born on a farm at Garvagh outside Banbridge in 1838. Being aware that he was a bright boy his parents, James and Sarah, encouraged him in his education and by 1862 he had gained a B.A. degree following studies at Queen's College in Belfast. He went on to attend Assembly's College and in 1864 he accepted a call to Kingsmills. The ordination service was held on the 21st December of that year and the first sermon that he preached was the Christmas story.

On arrival in the area Mr. Meeke appears to have gone to live in Divernagh House along with Mrs. Henry and her family. In those

days little more than one in twenty of the congregations possessed manses. But there was a great move within the Presbyterian Church to raise funds so that individual congregations could be subsidised and therefore encouraged to build. No doubt Mr. Meeke, being a young man, was keen to see that Kingsmills would have its own manse and the fact that money was available, was a big incentive to the church committee.

Obtaining a suitable site was relatively easy for in 1866, Samuel Adams, who farmed ten acres directly behind the church, give up the tenancy and moved to Bessbrook. Joseph Wilson the landlord, generously handed over three acres of the ground for the building of a manse and the work of clearing the site soon got underway.

The school which was in operation at this site was badly in need of replacement. So Mr. Meeke saw the building of a new school as another important and urgent project.

As both the construction of the Manse and the School were two major achievements during Mr. Meeke's ministry, they will be dealt with separately in the following two chapters and we will carry their history through until the present time.

#### Mr. Meeke's Pastoral Work

When Mr. Meeke came to Kingsmills there were 120 families and he received an annual stipend of £50. On Boxing Day, five days after his installation he performed his first baptism — a daughter of William and Mary Ann Dillon from Tullyhappy was baptised, Anna Margaret Jane Meeke Dillon. Over the years many other children were called after their new minister — Isabella Meeke Whitten from Ballymoyer (born 1865), James Meeke McComb from Belleek (born 1865), James Meeke Watson from Ballymoyer (born 1869), John Meeke Freeburn from Divernagh (born 1886), Maggie Meeke King from Carrowmannon (born 1894) and James Meeke Adams from Lisadian (born 1895).

Mr. Meeke started to keep baptismal, communicant and death records and this he did in a very thorough and legible way. His death register makes interesting reading one hundred years later as he recorded the cause of death as well as the age of the person. (See page 255). In the 50 years between 1874 and 1924, one out of every five buried in the graveyard was a child under fifteen years of age. The main causes of death in this age group were croup, scarlet fever, measles, tuberculosis and whooping cough — diseases which are mostly very rare now because of the use of vaccines. The most tragic incident recorded in the death register shows that diphtheria killed four young Patterson children in the space of two weeks in the winter of 1885. Their ages ranged from two to seven.

The oldest recorded member of the church was Henry Patterson from Drumhoney who died on the 8th November 1889 aged 109. He had been eight years old when the church was built.

The baptismal register shows just how busy Mr. Meeke would have been. Children were not baptised in the church in those days. Instead the minister performed this sacrament in the individual homes. He would have waited until there were a few children in one area to be baptised and then he baptised them all on the one day. The following is an extract from the baptismal register of 1871 :

Birth	Baptism	Child's Name	Parent's Name	Mother's Maiden Name	Residence
Sept. 4	Sept 27	William	George & Mary Jane Auterson	King	Maytown
Aug. 6	Sept. 27	John	Andrew & Margaret Barron	Davidson	Devernagh
Jun. 25	Sept. 27	Mary Margaret	Robert & Hannah Harpur	Nesbitt	Rathcarbery
May 25	Sept. 27	Robt. Samuel	John & Margaret Wallace		Lisnalea
Jul. 2	Sept. 27	William	John & Susan McKnight	Watson	Belleek
Aug. 1	Sept. 27	William	James & S. A. Donaldson	Donaldson	Devernagh
Jun. 1	Sept. 27	Wm. James	John & M. J. Cleland	Harpur	Rathcarbery
Jul. 6	Sept. 27	Elizabeth	Thomas & Agnes McKee	Barron	Lissadian

Mr. Meeke, like most Presbyterian ministers, paid an official visit to each member of the congregation twice a year. The Elder, Patterson drove him round in a pony and trap. He announced on a Sunday where he would be visiting and everyone was prepared. Many of the floors in the houses were earthen, so a white pillowslip was always placed on the floor beside the best chair in the kitchen. This practice continued until the beginning of the war years.

The twice yearly communion services were a time for much preparation and thanksgiving. Sometimes there would be a week of meetings leading up to the communion Sunday, really like a mission. The Sunday before was always a preparation Sunday. Then on the Friday around mid-day there was another preparation service and the following Monday there was a thanksgiving service held again at mid-day.

Communion Services in Mr. Meeke's time were about two hours long with an interval between the main part of the service and the communion at the end. There was a public house just opposite the church at the Cottage gates owned by a man called William Adams and apparently some of the Kingsmills folk would have gone over to the pub during the interval. Whether or not Mr. Meeke knew about this we don't know but it is clear that he took a strong stand on temperance. In 1867 a Total Abstinence Society was formed in connection with the Newry Presbytery. Mr. Meeke was one of only eight ministers who signed his name to a pledge which read as follows :

*"We resolve to abstain from all intoxicating drinks as beverages, to promote temperance and the discontinuance of the drinking customs of the times."*

He also organised a Total Abstinence Society in Kingsmills Church itself with sixty-four adults signing a pledge similar to the one above.

Part of the problem with alcohol was its availability. There was no shortage of public houses all over the country and the Kingsmills area was no exception. Apart from the one at the Cottage gate which closed down in the late 1870's when Adams emigrated to America, there were a variety of others to choose from. There was one just above Lisnalea crossroads owned by David McPherson, one at the Black Gables, one at Maytown crossroads and one half way between these last two. There was one at the Windy Gap and three in Mountnorris village. As well as this a man called Ford ran a public house at what is now the Wayside Inn. Poteen was made locally and sold cheap in illegal drinking houses called SHIBEEENS. There was one at Cully's Corner (the old name for Lisnalea crossroads) and many more scattered throughout the countryside. The police were continually trying to clamp down on these but often they had little success. The poteen was hidden in all sorts of places. A story is told of a shibeen at Ballygorman where cords were tied round the bottles and they were lowered down into a river so that the police couldn't find them. One day a suspicious policeman, searching around the river, got his feet wet. He went to the house of the man who ran the shibeen and was offered a glass of whiskey to warm himself up while he got his socks dried. When the policeman was about to leave he was told that the whiskey was on the house but he would have to pay for the drying of the socks. If the owner of the house had asked for money for the whiskey then he would have been in trouble with the law.

### Fivemilehill Baptist Church

Following the '59 Revival there was a great spirit of evangelistic zeal throughout Ireland and particularly in the North. Tent missions were held in the summer months in the country areas

and itinerant preachers travelled the province preaching the Gospel.

In the early 1870's two such men, a Mr. Tate and Mr. Brady erected a tent in a field owned by William Harpur about a quarter of a mile from the church in Lisadian. They preached every night for weeks throughout that year. The lively singing with accompanying music made a change from the Sunday morning meeting in Kingsmills where there was no music at all. Many of the locals attended this mission much to the disapproval of Mr. Meeke and as a result of Tate and Brady's success a permanent structure was erected at Fivemilehill under the auspices of the Baptist Church. However, only a few families broke their link with Kingsmills and actually joined the Baptists.



*Five Mile Hill Gospel Hall — Photographed around 1900*

Mr. Meeke saw the need for spiritual revival in his own church and in 1874 special evangelistic services were held. These were well attended and many young people responded to the Gospel. Similar meetings were held again in the winter of 1881 when in a response to a call from the Newry Presbytery to hold such meetings, Kingsmills was one of only eight churches to do so.

Mr. and Mrs. Meeke took a great interest in the young people. He started a Bible Class for the young men of the congregation and some of those who attended it later became superintendents and teachers in the district sabbath schools around the turn of the century.

### Church Renovations in the 1880's

Once the new Manse and school were built and in operation, the committee decided to spend some money on the church itself. New seats (those still used today) were made and fitted so that they were facing the north wall. The pulpit was made and placed in its present position with all the interesting carving being done by Thomas Tweedie (Mr. Thomas McCormick's grandfather) who was a joiner with Sandy Whelan who had the contract. Mr. Tweedie also made a new communion table which was in use until the 1950's when a new one was bought. This table now stands in the porch. The heating was by means of four coal burning stoves up the middle of the church and the floor was covered with a rush mat. Lighting was by brass oil lamps, two of which still remain in the pulpit although they have been converted to electricity.



*View of pulpit showing carving done by Thomas Tweedie*

The hedging around the church was taken away and William Kernaghan from Keadybeg built a wall. Thomas Ingram, a blacksmith from the Windy Gap made the wrought iron gates still in use today and Robert Crozier hung them.

## A Newspaper Account of the Church in 1885

The following interesting article appeared in the Newry Telegraph on Thursday, August 27th 1885. It is written by a reporter who signed himself "Iveagh" and the report was entitled "At Church". It gives us some insight into what a typical Sunday morning at Kingsmills was like :

### Kingsmills Presbyterian Church, Co. Armagh

"Here we are again. (Not a very original observation certainly, but where are we to look for original observations leaving out the Bible and Shakespeare?). Time and space are only measurable by circumstances. The few years that have passed since I appeared in your columns are but as yesterday. Yet what events have been crowded into the interval? The Afghan Campaign, the death of Gordon, the failure in the Sudan, and consequent fall of the Gladstone Ministry, the Pheonix Park tragedy and its appalling consequences, Churchill, Chamberlain, the new Reform Bills. But why need I enumerate; every day brings its quota to swell the events that make history. Having leisure again on Sundays, I have been thinking, not without suggestions, from some, perhaps too partial friends, of knocking off something now and then on the lines of my old sketches.

So on Sunday the 16th inst., I set out to visit the Church in question, which I had heard might be taken in all its surroundings and circumstances as somewhat of a model of an Ulster Country Presbyterian Congregation.

What a lovely morning this! The sun in his Autumn splendour — neither burning, nor scorching — sending his tinted rays over field and fen, mountain, stream and leafy woodland! The waving corn colouring into maturity, a promising boon that will make the heavy laden farmer's heart big with the thought of the low price of cattle, leap for joy and fill his stack yard by and by with "the ripe and golden grain" well saved and sure.

Today a lovlier sight still waving on foot in the gentle breeze, the green among the gold. Down there Newry quiet and still, if only for once this bright Sabbath morning, up there and behind the glorious mountains, the everlasting hills; out there the lazy Clanrye gliding to the sea, the great wash pot sewer and sanitary salvation of Newry. If I had time or if it lay near the subject in hand, I might ask why is not this splendid outlet to the sea utilised? It would not take a very vivid imagination to picture a line of docks with tall masts and funnels, indicating the presence of ocean ships and steamers, taking out from, and bringing to our very doors, home and foreign produce without second-hand transmission. I have no doubt, however, but that the day will come when our children will smile at our simplicity, as we have smiled at the primitive simplicity of our forefathers.

On through Newry, then up and out into another County — new views, new prospects — Bessbrook at rest, its spindles and its looms, at rest — well earned rest — from the batter and the clatter of a week's toil, and turmoil and labour. Slieve Donard and Slieve Gullion and Slieve Dhu, the magnificent Viaduct and the Egyptian Arch, Ballymoyer, Whitecross and the Gosford Demesne! Why do people travel so far for sights and scenes? The old adage, "Far off fields look green" might go far to explain the intricate perversity of our thoughts and feelings.

But we are now at the Church, up from the main road a little but alongside a cross-country county road. In front of the entrance gate, to the left the National School; to the right the Session House, with Stables underneath. Facing us the Church, a plain structure, two gables, two side walls, with ordinary pitched roof and porch. Kingsmills! Is that the name of a district, or parish, or townland, I inquire? No. The name originated in this way :

Long ago when Presbyterianism was in its infancy in this Country a man named King was possessed of a Corn Mill down below where the Meeting House is now situated, on the Blackwater River, and he let the people meet for worship in his Mill Loft. When the people were able to build a Church they associated the old place of worship with their new Meeting House, and transferred the name from the old Mill in the Glen to the Church on the hill — "Kingsmills".

But before entering, I think I have time to take a look round — a weakness of mine to which I have confessed before. I hear the choir practising the tunes for the Service in the School room, so the service, I assume, has not yet commenced.

Ha! here in front is a strange monument for a Country Churchyard — an obelisk, with square polished granite base, about fourteen feet high with round marble pedestal, broken at the top, with inwrought wreath of flowers round the column half way up. "What happened to it?", I asked a friend I chanced to meet, "was it a storm or what broke the column?" "Indeed", said my friend "I just asked the same question the first time I saw it, but it seems it is intended to be that way as the emblem of the broken unfinished life of the person whose day life, as you will see by this inscription were cut short in his prime. He was a brother of our esteemed Minister and was much lamented". And I read : *"In loving remembrance of Moses Meek, M.A., Inspector of National Schools, lost overboard between Dublin and Holyhead, 27th September, 1883, aged thirty three years"*,

"passed  
To where beyond these voices there is peace,  
No night there".

There are several other monuments very tasteful and interesting, but I shall only trouble you with one which speaks for itself :

Erected by the Congregation of Kingsmills, in memory of their late bleoved pastor, the Rev. Alexander Henry, who was for thirty seven years Minister of this Congregation. He was born at Gortygannon, County Tyrone, November, 1798, ordained to the pastoral charge of Kingsmills, 1826, died at his residence, Divernagh, November 8th, 1863. To his people he devoted all the powers of a mind of great energy and singleness of purpose. He was a man, faithful in all things in the Church, over which his Master had made him overseer. He walked humbly with his God in peace and goodwill with all men".

I can trace very easily the history of the Congregation. Over the Porch a stone has the following — "1788", and underneath the initials, "J. B.", which represents the first Minister, the Rev. James Beatty, who ministered till 1826. Thirty eight years followed by the Rev. Alexander Henry who ministered till 1863. Thirty seven years followed by the present Minister, the Rev. James Meeke, who was ordained in December 1864 being thus over twenty years minister of the Congregation, and who is a comparatively young man, about forty years of age, of fine presence, good, honest, straight looking, intelligent countenance, but of that more anon.

The people are evidently now hastening into the Church, indicating that the Service is about to commence. So I join the throng of well dressed decent-looking folk and drop in too. Having passed the little Porch referred to, we enter what may be called the Vestibule, which seems to have been utilised out of the Church proper. It is in the form of pitch-pine walls, opened into from the door in the centre of the gable, with fireplace opposite, having a pipe running up through the roof — not a bad idea at all. By the way, I should mention here that the Church was all renovated inside about two years since, and that Mr. Alexander Wheelan of Newry, was the Architect and Contractor.

Inside I happened to drop into a seat on which I see engraved on a brass plate the name Joseph Wilson, D.L., the gentleman upon whose property the Church and Manse is built, and who is annual contributor to its funds. Looking around the first thing that meets my eye is the following inscription on a marble slab set in the wall of the Church :

*"This tablet is erected by this sorrowing congregation of Kingsmills to the memory of their late lamented landlord, Thomas Wilson, Esq., of Dublin who died the 5th October 1857, as a token of respect for the untiring and munificent liberality with which he, for the last twenty years contributed to the support of this congregation". "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them".*

From inquiries made afterwards I found that the gentleman in whose seat I sat is the present landlord of the estate around

Kingsmills, comprising several townlands of which Robert Harpur Esq., J.P., Divernagh House, who is an influential member, elder and Sabbath School Superintendent of this interesting congregation, is the agent. The present landlord has followed his father's footsteps in regard to the congregation. He subscribes to its funds steadily, gave the congregation three acres of ground for a Manse, with a lease forever, at a nominal rent. The Manse is quite beside the Church and, with the grounds, seems neat, commodious and tasteful.

The service has now been in progress for some time. The Minister rises to commence the sermon. The text is taken from the twentieth chapter of Matthew, the 28th verse — "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and give His life a ransom for many". The preacher said — these words are a most beautiful description of this life, that life which was doubly lived for us — in one sense, in our room and stead, and in another as our pattern and example. He did not think words could be found anywhere to give a truer and simpler description of the life of our beloved Lord. He came down from the unclouded light, where he dwelt the creator and owner and controller of all worlds. He left the throne of the universe, where seraph and archangel rejoiced to do His will and minister to Him. He came down among us not to be ministered unto, but to minister, not to be waited on but to serve, and as the crown of service to give His life.

We are this morning to consider the life of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, as described by these words, and you will notice the connection in which the words occur. The desire to be greatest had broken out again among the twelve. They had an idea that some new development must shortly take place. There was an expectation that this journey to Jerusalem would be followed by a new departure, perhaps by an arousal of His Kingship and the actual setting up of His throne at Jerusalem. Under some such expectation James and John put forward their mother Salome to solicit places of honour on the right and left hand in His kingdom. When the ten heard of this secret attempt to obtain a pre-eminence they were filled with indignation. Their Master, not disowning them, not withdrawing Himself from them because of this evidence of imperfection, as some of His professed followers do, calls them together and patiently teaches them what true greatness is. The highest honour is gained by the greatest humility. Seats at my right hand are for those whose service is best and truest; not for those whose selfishness or ambition would claim them, but for those who prove themselves worthy of them. Among men greatness is supposed to belong to those who can tyrannise over others, and who can make others feel their superiority and minister to their pleasure, and it is sought for that purpose. But it shall not be so among you; it is not so in my Kingdom. In my Kingdom it is the very reverse. After further

referring to the elements of true greatness in a most practical and lucid manner the preacher said he would consider the words of the text under two heads. First as a description of Christ's own life and second as supplying a pattern for us. The text only needs to be repeated to see how fully it describes his life, "He came", etc. The purpose for which he came is stated by Paul in this way — "He suffered thus the just for the unjust that he might bring them to God. That was from a state of enmity to love, from sin to holiness, that he might make us fit for dwelling in His Kingdom and bring us at last to dwell there. The preacher said he wanted his people to get a clear grasp of that thought. He didn't come as the Law-giver to assert His authority and to punish all who would transgress His laws, but as the reconciler and mediator with an offer of pardon, to win men back to their allegiance. "God sent His son into the world, not to condemn it, but that the world through him might be saved. He never asserted His power except to benefit mankind, never put forth His strength except to do good. In a word His whole life was not for Himself but for others and He crowned that unselfish life by a death for others.

In the next place our Lord's life is our pattern. The two great features of His life were Unselfishness and Humility. The more we study Christ's Life described in His words and acts as recorded, and try to get down into its secret springs, you will find that unselfishness is the very breath of His being. Over and over again did He say, "I came not to do My own will". Then along with this Unselfishness of Christ we notice His Humility. He never did any service with the air of One who was making a great concession, whatever He did was done in the humblest way — done out of pure love, and the simplest desire to serve.

In this strain and the most eloquent manner, the reverend preacher wound up a most instructive and practical discourse, which was listened to with the most profound attention, not a sound coming in or going out, but all the utmost reverence, attention and decorum. After sermon the collection was taken up by the elders, who I hope are elders indeed, whose duties are not confined to handing round the plate on Sunday. It seems to me that this appears to be all the duty of the general run of elders, with, perhaps the extra trouble of handing round the bread and wine, twice a year at communions. Are they not supposed to visit the sick, and pray with them — do they do it? Are they not supposed to remonstrate and advise with the erring — do they do it? Are they not supposed to be an example to the community generally — are they?

After the collection, prayer, singing and the benediction, the congregation dispersed in the most becoming manner.

'IVEAGH'

## Appointing of First Trustees of the Church

At a congregational meeting on 21st June 1888, the first trustees of our church were appointed. These men were to administer the property which by now consisted of the church, school and the manse farm. (Details of Trustees Page 202).

One of the first tasks which these men had to perform was to negotiate a lease for the church property. It is hard to understand why no legal transaction had ever taken place in the previous one hundred years but on 21st September 1888, in the presence of Mr. Meeke the trustees signed a lease from Joseph Wilson agreeing to pay an annual rent of £4-17-0 for two and a half acres of church property.

## The Visitation of Presbytery July 1, 1890

When the presbytery visited Kingsmills they found that the Church and property was in a "fairly healthy state". Robert Harpur J.P. and Joseph King were the representative elders and James Patterson and J. H. Edgar represented the committee.

They reported that there were 120 families connected with the congregation and that there were two hundred and thirty on the communicants roll. There were two sabbath schools with 190 children between them. Some of the five elders were reported as visiting the sick and conducting worship in families with great acceptance. There were Sunday evening services alternating around the different districts and the poor were expected to come to these services. Members of the church helped financially to educate children whose parents couldn't afford to.

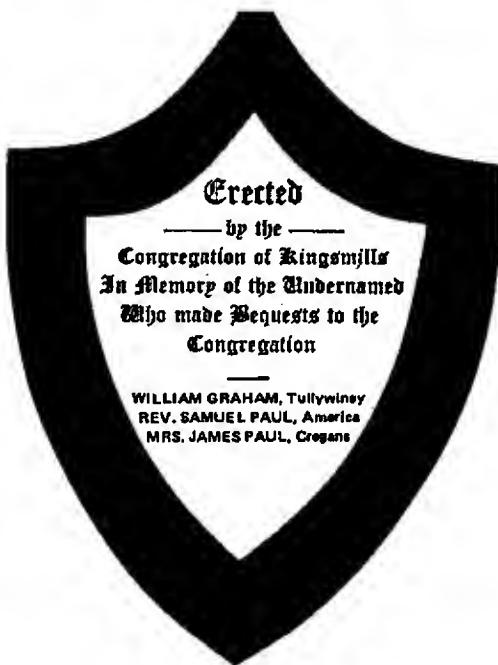
Mr. Meeke visited his congregation at least once a year and conducted a Bible Class for young men where they were instructed in the principles of the Presbyterian Church. They read Witherow's "Apostolic Church" and Osborne's Catechism together. There was one student for the ministry — Mr. Meeke's son, Hugh. The annual total income of the church was £164-12-0.

## The Graham Bequest

In the nineteenth century, Graham was a very common surname in the townlands of Divernagh, Eshwary and Tullywinney and many of them were members of Kingsmills. William Graham was born in 1819 and he farmed at Tullywinney until his death in July 1893. Little would have been remembered about him had he not decided to leave some money to the Church. He bequeathed "the residue of his property in equal shares to the several congregations in the Newry Presbytery for the use of the poor within their bounds." Mr. Meeke and John Elliott were the executors and when they had wound up the estate they were able to distribute the large sum of £803 among the twenty two

congregations in the Presbytery. This was all greatly appreciated but it was ironic that as a result of this will a Mrs. George Graham, on whose farm William held a mortgage, was left destitute when it was sold. The executors could do nothing about it as they were bound by the terms of the will but it was agreed that all those congregations who benefited should give a small yearly contribution towards her maintenance.

Apart from £36 to be used for the poor of the congregation, Mr. Graham also left £100 to Kingsmills. To mark this bequest and others by Rev. S. Paul and Mrs. Paul, a small memorial tablet was erected on the east wall of the church in 1901.



### The Paul Bequest

On the west wall of the church there is a large white marble memorial stone erected to the memory of James Paul from Cregans. He was born in 1817 in the Killeavy district outside Newry and it is thought that the family moved to the Cregans area around 1840. They rented over forty acres on the Earl of Gosford's estate and James farmed there all his life. He was an active member of Kingsmills Church and was one of the original trustees. He and his wife had no children and it was his intention that when he died he would leave some money to the Church funds. However, he never got round to making a will and when

he died, as a result of an accident in 1899, his wife decided that she would carry out his wishes. She made a will leaving £100 to the Church to be invested in whatever way they thought would earn the best interest. Two thirds of the interest was to go to the stipend and one third to sustentation. As well as this she left £20 to the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund and £5 to the Twentieth Century Fund. She also erected the tablet in memory of her late husband and when she died the following year the name 'Paul' also died out in the congregation.

The £100 bequeathed by Mrs. Paul was invested with the Belfast Water Commissioners at 3½% interest.



*James Paul, Cregans*

*Memorial Tablet erected to his memory*

### **The Turn of the Century**

This was probably the time of greatest blessing ever witnessed in Kingsmills. Mr. and Mrs. Meeke had now been in the area for over thirty years. The young people who had been brought up through the Sunday School and the Bible Class were now adults, some with children of their own and under Mr. Meeke's guidance they operated four very successful Sabbath Schools including the one in the church. There was a combined total of 220 children on the rolls and in 1900 there were 24 teachers.

The one held in the Church commenced at 11.00 a.m. and continued for one hour. Then Church followed for another hour and a half. The children were taught in both the Church and the

school. Ninety years ago Sunday school was very different to that of today. There was a big emphasis on learning things by heart — passages from the Bible and the catechism had to be recited word perfect. There were no flannelgraphs or visual aids of any kind yet the young people learned much by recitation. Maggie Elliott and Maggie Wallace both from Rathcarbery won Gold Medals for answering in the Newry Presbytery Sabbath School Examinations in the early years.

**SUPERINTENDENTS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS CONNECTED  
WITH KINGSMILLS AROUND THE EARLY 1900's**



*John Adams who taught in Lisnalea, pictured in  
Belleek band uniform.*



*Thomas A. Elliott who taught in  
Kingsmills and Lisnalea.*



*William Andrews who taught in  
Belleek.*



*Matthew McIlroy who taught in  
Divernagh.*

## **Divernagh Sunday School**

It operated in the old Orange Hall under the superintendentship of Matthew McIlroy around the turn of the century but when he transferred to Bessbrook Church in 1912 the Sunday School was also transferred. Nevertheless many of the young Kingsmills people from that area continued to attend. The Sunday School closed when Mr. McIlroy died but it was reopened in the 1950's by Mr. Tom Moorhead from Bessbrook and Mr. Bobby Cousins from Belfast. After a number of years it once again closed down but within the last ten years Mr. Sam Paul has conducted an afternoon Sunday School for the young people of the area in connection with Bessbrook Church.

## **Belleek Sunday School**

It was held in a barn on William Andrews farm, just ouside the village. The farm is now owned by Mr. George McKnight. William Andrews was an elder in the church. He married Miss Catherine McKnight and they had six children. Three of his sons served in the 1914-18 War. This Sunday School performed a very important function because it was quite a distance to Kingsmills from Belleek especially by foot. It gave the young people of the area an opportunity to learn God's Word and to keep in touch with a Presbyterian Church. It closed around 1912.

## **Lisnalea Sunday School**

It operated for a good number of years before closing in 1913. The superintendent was Thomas Elliott and he was ably helped by John Adams from Lissadian who died in 1912 after having taught Sunday School classes for over thirty six years; mainly in Kingsmills. The school was held in the same building as the day school now the property of Mr. Edmund McCammon. It met from 5 p.m. - 6 p.m. and there would have been around sixty youngsters attending.

Mr. Meeke periodically visited these Sunday schools as well as teaching the Bible Class in Kingsmills. He continued to do so until his retirement when Master Hunter took over the Bible Class. It catered for those in their late teens and twenties and it grew rapidly from just a few at the turn of the century to over forty in 1915.

## **The Annual Sunday School Fete**

Each year in the month of July a Fete was held in Johnny Elliott's field at the Crossroads and all four Sunday Schools were involved. It was a big event in the local calendar and the success was due mainly to the efforts of Mrs. Meeke, who co-ordinated the whole affair.

Each year she made three banners, one for each outlying Sunday School and on it she would embroider an appropriate

text eg. "Feed My Lambs". On the afternoon of the Fete the children assembled at their nearest school and marched behind their banner to the church arriving about 3 p.m. Then, year about, either Belleek or Tullyhappy band would have marched from their Orange Hall and met the young people at the crossroads.

Belleek was a First Flute Band and some of its members were Kingsmills folk. Some of those who played in the band were William John Preston who beat the big drum, Martin Andrews (the tenor drum), David Patton, John Adams, William Spiers, Alex McConnell, Ben Taylor and Sam Preston.

Tullyhappy was a part flute band. William Thomas Lockhart was the bass drummer and some of the flautists were James Lockhart, three members of the McIlroy family from Crankey and Bob Moorhead from Goraghwood.

The combined group of children marched behind the band into the field, where all sorts of games were organised — games like "The Grand Old Duke of York", "Hind Most to Three" and "Kissing Rings". There was a break for tea and currant bread about 5 p.m. and the day finished about 9 p.m., when the tired children and their parents walked up to three or four miles home.

These fetes continued with good success until the end of the First World War when the new idea was to travel some miles out of the area on an annual outing.

### The Financial Report 1903

The earliest financial report which can be found for our Church is the one dated 1903. We can see that it was a simple affair compared with those of the present day. Normally only the head of each family contributed — the money going to either Stipend or Sustentation. The financial statement shows us the great emphasis which was placed on giving to missions and to the poor.

A copy of this Report is found overleaf.

## KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1903.

MINISTER:  
 REV. JAMES MEEKE, B.A.

## SESSION:

THE MINISTER,  
 ROBERT HARPUR, J.P.,  
 JAMES PATTERSON, SUSTENTATION AGENT, Lurganah, Whitecross;  
 JOHN H. EDGAR, | THOS. A. ELLIOTT,  
 ROBERT TAYLOR, | JOHN W. DILLON,  
 WILLIAM ANDREWS.

## COMMITTEE:

THE ELDERS,	JOHN KING,
JOHN M'CORMICK,	R. S. ROGERS,
WILLIAM DILLON,	H. S. PATTERSON.
GEORGE AUTERSON,	
JOHN ELLIOTT, Jun., Treasurer Sabbath Collections.	
ROBERT HARPUR, Jun., Treasurer Stipend.	
JOSEPH J. KING, Secretary of Committee.	

## STIPEND AND SUSTENTATION LIST.

		Stipend.	Sustentation.
Alexander M'Donald	..	£1 0 0	£0 6 0
W. W. Rogers	..	1 5 0	0 10 0
Joseph J. King	..	1 0 0	0 11 0
James Bell	..	0 15 0	0 8 0
John Elliott, Jun.	..	2 0 0	1 10 0
Mark Patterson	..	1 10 0	0 10 0
W. R. Nesbitt	..	1 10 0	1 0 0
George Auterson	..	1 5 0	0 10 0
John Gourley	..	1 5 0	
James Harrison	..	1 0 0	0 8 0
J. Williamson, Drumhoney	..	1 0 0	0 6 0
David Elliott	..	1 0 0	0 9 0
William Rogers	..	0 15 0	0 15 0
R. S. Rogers	..	1 0 0	1 0 0
Mrs. S. Patterson	..	1 10 0	0 16 0

ANNUAL REPORT OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

	Stipend.	Sustentation.
Robert Elliott	£1 0 0	£0 8 0
Mrs. Paul's Bequest	2 3 9	1 1 10
Thomas Elliott	1 0 0	0 8 0
David M'Kinley	0 10 0	0 5 0
Robert Williamson	0 12 0	0 6 0
John Williamson	0 6 0	—
Miss Patton	1 5 0	0 10 0
H. S. Andrews	0 10 0	0 5 0
J. J. Andrews	0 10 0	0 5 0
W. G. Ross	0 10 0	0 2 0
Thomas M'Kee	0 9 0	0 6 0
James King	0 7 6	0 6 0
John Weir	0 6 0	0 5 0
William Andrews	0 6 0	0 4 0
William Patterson	0 5 0	—
Miss Harpur, Lurganah, $\frac{1}{2}$ year	0 5 6	—
Thomas Sinclair	0 10 0	—
John M'Cormick	1 0 0	—
John A. M'Cormick	0 15 0	0 5 0
Mrs. M'Clure	1 2 0	0 10 0
Mrs. Irwin	0 15 0	0 6 0
S. Dillon	1 0 0	—
George Patton	0 7 6	0 6 0
James Graham	1 2 0	0 8 0
John Elliott, sen.	1 0 0	0 6 0
Wm. John Elliott	0 10 0	0 6 0
John Harrison	0 10 0	0 6 0
James Robb	1 2 0	0 6 0
Robert Harpur, J.P.	3 0 0	2 0 0
Reps. of Wm. Harpur	1 0 0	—
Rev. J. Meeke	—	2 0 0
Graham Bequest	—	2 0 0
John King	2 0 0	0 10 0
James Patterson	1 10 0	0 10 0
H. S. Patterson	0 15 0	—
Mrs. W. Harpur	2 0 0	1 0 0
David M'Cullough	1 0 0	0 5 0
Miss Graham	0 10 0	0 6 0
John Williamson, Eswary	0 10 0	0 7 0
Robert Watson	0 10 0	0 6 0
Mrs. Watson	0 15 0	0 8 0
Samuel King	0 15 0	0 8 0
William Dillon	1 5 0	0 12 0
J. W. Dillon	0 8 0	—
Wm. J. Robb	1 0 0	—
Mrs. Hooke	0 10 0	0 6 0
N. Moore, recently joined	—	—
Miss King	0 10 0	0 4 0
Mrs. Moffatt, $\frac{1}{2}$ year	0 4 0	—
Mrs. Craig	0 8 0	—
Mrs. King, The Moor	0 18 0	0 8 0
Robert Taylor	1 0 0	0 10 0
John Patterson (H.)	1 0 0	0 5 0
Reps. of T. Sinclair	1 0 0	0 10 0
James Sinclair	0 12 0	—
John Patton	0 15 0	0 8 0
Mrs. D. Cartmill	0 10 0	0 2 0
Sam Adams	0 6 0	0 2 0
Thomas Wallace	0 10 0	—
John Patterson, Mill	0 5 0	—

ANNUAL REPORT OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

		Stipend.	Sustentation.
Mrs. M'Comb, Belleek	..	£0 10 6	£0 2 0
Mrs. Moffatt, Lisnalea	..	0 5 0	0 4 0
James Wallace	..	0 10 0	0 2 0
Andrew Barron	..	0 5 0	0 1 0
Sam Cartmill	..	0 10 0	0 4 0
Wm. M'Ilroy	..	0 6 0	0 3 0
Mrs. Stevenson	..	0 5 0	0 4 0
Samuel Cole	..		0 2 0
M. M'Ilroy	..	0 10 0	0 5 0
George Whitten	..	0 14 0	0 6 0
William Patton	..	0 4 0	0 2 0
J. H. Edgar	..	0 8 0	0 7 0
Sam Heron	..	0 6 0	
John Adams	..	0 4 0	0 4 0
James M'Knight	..	0 5 0	0 4 0
William M'Knight	..	0 5 0	0 3 0
Charles Barron	..	0 5 0	
Mrs. Irvine Barron	..	0 7 0	0 3 0
John Kernaghan	..	0 7 0	0 6 0
John Mills	..	0 4 0	0 2 0
Mrs. Greer	..	0 10 0	
Willie Hadden	..	0 5 0	
Robt. Patterson	..	0 3 0	
Mrs. M'Comb, Greyhilla	..	0 15 0	0 6 0
Wm. Crosier	..	0 10 0	
W. G. M'Knight	..		0 2 0
Robert M'Connell	..		0 2 0
Robert Moffatt	..	0 6 0	
James Moorhead	..	0 6 0	
Robert Wallace	..	0 5 0	0 2 0
Mrs. Mitchell	..	0 5 0	
James M'Donald	..	0 8 0	0 4 0
Gco. M'Donald	..	0 5 0	0 2 0
Mrs. M'Knight	..	0 4 6	0 4 0
Mrs. Patterson, Cutlacken	..	0 10 0	0 6 0
Mrs. Watson	..		0 3 0
Hugh Patterson	..	0 5 0	0 2 0
John Freeburn	..	0 5 0	0 4 0
Wm. Williamson	..	0 6 0	0 4 0

Dr. FINANCIAL STATEMENT. Cr.

Stipend Collected	.. £74 7 0	Stipend	.. £74 7 0
Sustentation	.. 35 1 10	Sustentation Fund	.. 35 13 10
Quarterly Visitors	.. 0 12 0	Missions	.. 27 8 5
Mission Collection	.. £26 4 11	Orphan Society	.. 10 1 0
Boxes, &c., Orphans	.. 1 3 6	Sabbath School Society	.. 2 0 0
	27 8 5	Given to Poor	.. 4 2 0
Sabbath Collections	.. 10 11 3	Sexton's Salary	.. 4 0 0
Orphan Society	.. 10 1 0	Gratuity	.. 0 10 0
Collection for S. S. Society	.. 1 0 0	Presbytery Fees and Printing	.. 2 3 2
Collected for	.. 1 0 0	Assembly Expenses	.. 1 10 0
Interest on Graham's Bequest	.. 1 10 0	Communion Expenses	.. 1 12 0
Grass of Green	.. 0 4 6	Insurance	.. 1 0 7
		Graveyard Man, and Repairs	.. 1 15 6
		Coke, Coal, Oil	.. 1 10 9
		Due Treasurer, 1902	.. 0 18 2
		Balance in hand	.. 2 3 8
	£170 16 0		£170 16 0

ROBERT HARPUR, JUN.  
JOHN ELLIOTT, JUN.

## Kingsmills Concert 1908

It appears that for many years it was usual to have a combined Sabbath and day school concert some time during the week before Christmas. A newspaper account of such an event held on Christmas Eve 1908 makes interesting reading.

"The choir sang choruses and school songs and performed gymnastic exercises. There were pianoforte and harmonium selections by Miss Moore's pupils. In addition to the day school children, the following took part in the entertainment — Misses King, Lurgana House; Misses King, Drumhoney; Misses Elliott, Rathcarbery; Miss Sadie Elliott, Drumherriff; Miss May Girvan, Miss Crozier, Messrs. John Boardman, T. W. Sinclair, Thomas McKnight and William Elliott. Accompaniments were played by Miss Meeke, Miss Moore and Mr. H. Ferguson (day school teacher). Rev. Meeke and his son-in-law Rev. Chambers from Hollywood handed out sixty books as prizes for attendance and answering at Sunday School."

## The New Heating System in the Church

For a few years prior to 1901, there were many complaints in regard to the lack of heat in the church during the winter months. The four coal stoves up the middle of the building were not throwing out enough heat and anyway, they were getting old fashioned.

Mr. Meeke volunteered to get plans and specifications for a new system. A firm from Belfast was prepared to supply pipes which would run up the length of the church and Mr. Alex Whelan was asked to give an estimate for erecting a boiler room. He suggested that it should be placed at the front of the church and that it should be high enough to accommodate a minister's room above. His tender of £55 was considered too high so the committee decided to scrap the idea of the minister's room and build a boiler room against the gable wall behind the pulpit. This would have caused interference with Rev. Beatty's grave, so the minister and Johnny Elliott called with Thomas Sinclair who was the representative of the late minister, to see if he objected to the removal of the remains. He most certainly did object and the site was then moved to a vacant spot in front of the grave, the place where it still stands.

Mr. Whelan was not awarded the contract. Instead it went to a Mr. Johnston from Newry who constructed the boiler room for only £18-10-0. When the heating equipment and labour was all paid for it amounted to £84. Like Mr. Whelan, Mr. Johnston had Kingsmills connections, being married to a sister of Robert Watson from Drumcrown.

The church was closed during the repairs with the congregation meeting in the school house. At the re-opening service in the

summer of 1902, Mr. Meeke was able to state that the amount spent on the new system had been subscribed and paid without seeking a single subscription outside their own members. He was also able to say that a similar sum of £90 had been paid to the Twentieth Century Fund.

Some days after this, a deputation from the congregation, made up of John Williamson and John McCormick, called at the Manse and presented a cheque to Mr. Meeke requesting him and his wife to take a month's holiday, another generous gesture by the congregation.

### Mapping of the Graveyard 1903

In 1903 it was decided to draw a map of the graveyard and record the names of the plot holders. James Bell, a builder from Drumcrow and a member of Mountnorris Church had drawn graveyard maps for a number of congregations so he was asked by the Committee to take on this job at Kingsmills which apparently he did free. On the 1st July he presented the map at a committee meeting. It was well received and it was then decided to frame it. The map still exists but is in a very delicate state. A list of those who claimed grave plots at that time can be found on Page 256.

In 1974 the graveyard was remapped at a cost of almost £250.

### Seating Arrangements in the Church

It is hard for us to imagine having to pay for a seat in church but this was the usual practice in many Presbyterian churches in the early part of this century.

In Kingsmills, people got fed up sitting just anywhere, so numbers were put on each seat and every family, connected with the church, was able to rent a pew if they could afford to. If not, they could share a seat with another family and each would pay half the rent. The money raised was paid through the stipend. Some people objected to sharing a seat and in 1904 the Committee made a ruling that any seat holder who would not share, would have to pay the full price of two sittings.

There was a special pew letting committee, who were in charge of the procedure. The "best" seats were the two rows of pews on the west side of the building. The Wilson family, who were the landlords, occupied one of these. Many of the seats on this side had mats rolled out for extra comfort and warmth. Over at the other end of the building was what was known as "Corduroy Row" because most of the seatholders were small farmers or labourers.

### Acquisition of Lisadian Cottage

Around 1890, Mr. and Mrs. David Irwin from Maytöne, Glenanne came to live as tenants in the Cottage. They were an

elderly couple and not really fit to keep the property in good order so it got into a bad state of repair. Mr. Irwin died and in 1905 Mrs. Irwin obtained the Cottage and five acres of land when the tenants were given the opportunity to purchase the property on which they lived. She died in 1911 and in her will she directed her executors, John McCormick and Thomas Elliott, to offer the property for sale to the church for a sum of £25. The land and buildings were to be held in trust by the session of the church for the "advancement of the religious and secular education of the children in connection with the congregation."

So the property was purchased and extensive renovations were carried out. It was decided to lease the Cottage and the first tenant was Master Hunter and his family. They lived in it until they left the area in 1924. In 1926 a congregational meeting was held to discuss a proposal to sell it but this was overwhelmingly defeated. So various families lived in it in the years which followed and at first it was well maintained. However in the 40's, 50's and 60's it was allowed by successive church committees to fall into an irretrievable state of disrepair. The surveyor's report following an inspection in October 1954 states that "the building is in a most dilapidated and neglected condition." The next report in June 1970 states that the Cottage is "uninhabited and more or less derelict; not practicable to put in order. Since last inspected leadwork has been removed from portions of the roof. Surrounding grounds are overgrown. In my opinion it should be demolished." So, following a visitation of Presbytery at the same time, the Cottage was declared unsafe and it was bulldozed to the ground. There is now no trace of this, once beautiful building which graced the landscape for around one hundred and thirty years.

It has proved difficult to find even a photograph of the building but this school group (opposite) taken at Kingsmills around 1953, shows the Cottage in the background. Behind the wall there was a small playground where the church car park now is.



Teachers : left — Miss Burrows (Principal) and Miss Dodds (now Mrs. McWhirter, Newry). Children : (front row, left to right) — Mary Cartmill, Lisadian; Norna Patton, Carrickananny; Eileen Heron, Lisadian; Eileen Andrews, Carrickananny; Florrie Irwin, Keadybeg; Bertie Rogers, Lisadian; Jim Cartmill, Lisadian. (Middle row, left to right) — Cecil Rogers, Lisadian; Trevor Cartmill, Lisadian; Bertie Chambers, Carrickananny; Thomas Moffett, Lisadian (decd.); Florence Andrews, Carrickananny; Violet Andrews, Carrickananny; Maurice Freeburn, Keadybeg; David Patton, Carrickananny. (Back row, left to right) — Robin Patton, Carrickananny; Norman Andrews, Carrickananny; Bertie Andrews, Carrickananny; Gerald Cartmill, Rathcarbery.

## The Signing of the Solemn League and Covenant

In 1886, the British Prime Minister, William Ewart Gladstone introduced a "Government of Ireland Bill" in the House of Commons. It provided for the establishing of a separate Parliament for Ireland and this immediately caused widespread alarm among the Protestant population. The General Assembly met and unanimously declared their opposition to Home Rule, stating that it was "disastrous to the best interests of the country". They saw it as leading to the ascendancy of one class and creed, namely the Roman Catholics, who would implement their authority over the entire country. The Presbyterians had suffered enough hardship under the Established Anglican Church and were only too glad to be rid of this yoke when it was disestablished in 1870.

Gladstone's bill was not received very well, even in England and on 7th June 1886 it was defeated. His second Home Rule Bill however, was passed in the Commons in 1893 but rejected by the Lords. It looked as if it was only a question of time before Ireland would have a separate Parliament. This became even more of a reality as a result of the 1910 General Election, when the support of the Irish M.P.'s was necessary to keep the Liberal Government in power.

In 1912, another Home Rule Bill was passed in the Commons and, because of the Parliament Act of the previous year, the House of Lords could not delay its coming into operation beyond 1914.

Edward Carson, a Dublin lawyer, with the help of the Conservative Party leaders in England, led the opposition to Home Rule with great skill and courage. On Saturday 28th September 1912, over 470,000 men and women signed the Solemn League and Covenant, pledging their opposition to Home Rule. Bessbrook was decorated with arches and flags. Crowds of people attended special services in the churches and afterwards five hundred men walked four deep down the village to the Orange Hall, where the Covenant was signed. The Kingsmills people gathered on that Saturday afternoon for a service of prayer and intercession led by Mr. Meeke. At the end of the service, he read slowly over the Covenant and he then told the people to read carefully for themselves and then sign it. John King from Lurgana, was the first man to sign it, followed by the remaining adults in the gathering.

The outbreak of war in 1914 put the question of Home Rule into cold storage. Then after the war came "the troubles", when Anglo-Irish relations became very bitter. These only ended in 1921, when the twenty six counties were given dominion status and the six counties forming Northern Ireland, remained under U.K. rule.



## Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant.

**D**ecked convinced in our consciences that Home Rule would be disastrous to the material well-being of Ulster as well as of the whole of Ireland, subversive of our civil and religious freedom, destructive of our citizenship and perilous to the unity of the Empire, we, whose names are underwritten, men of Ulster, loyal subjects of His Gracious Majesty King George V., humbly relying on the God whom our fathers in days of stress and trial confidently trusted, do hereby pledge ourselves in solemn Covenant throughout this our time of threatened calamity to stand by one another in defending for ourselves and our children our cherished position of equal citizenship in the United Kingdom and in using all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland. ¶ And in the event of such a Parliament being forced upon us we further solemnly and mutually pledge ourselves to refuse to recognise its authority. ¶ In sure confidence that God will defend the right we hereto subscribe our names. ¶ And further, we individually declare that we have not already signed this Covenant.

The above was signed by me at Kingsmills  
"Ulster Day," Saturday, 28th September, 1912.

Thomas A. Elliott

— God Save the King. —

*Copy of Solemn League and Covenant — 1912*

## Getting to Church at the Beginning of the Century

Church started at 12.00 giving everybody plenty of time to make their way there. A lot of people walked, especially those from the Belleek direction. One man, walking down the road with his twelve children, would have called in a neighbour's house to get a sixpenny bit (ie. 2½ pence) changed into halfpennies for collection. A few people had bicycles and some came by pony and trap. In 1895, the Stables had to be enlarged to accommodate these. What they did was to erect a large wooden shed, with a corrugated iron roof, at the back of the Session house. There was no parking space at the front of the church — just a narrow roadway. An unusual vehicle seen arriving at the church was a jaunting car. It was owned by Martin Andrews from Belleek and he used it during the week to carry the mail from Newry to Castleblayney.

### Mr. Meeke's Retirement

On 15th April 1913, at a meeting of the Newry Presbytery, Mr. Meeke announced that he would like to retire from the active duties of the ministry. His congregation were rather shocked as well as sad for they had hoped that he might complete the fifty years with them, if this were at all possible. Many of them had never known another minister in Kingsmills and it was hard to imagine life without Mr. Meeke.

Speaking at the Presbytery meeting Thomas Elliott and John Watson Dillon, elders of the church, expressed the sorrow felt by every member of their congregation at the prospect of losing the active services of Mr. Meeke as their minister. They spoke of the confidence and respect which he commanded from every member of the community and of the perfect gentlemanliness of his character. Families were delighted by his visits to their homes and they admired the high ideals of the Christian ministry which he showed in his everyday life. The spiritual interests of his people, were always his chief concern but at the same time Mr. Meeke was a very wise businessman, giving careful attention to the temporal affairs of the congregation. The proof was all around them. They now had a beautiful Manse, fine schools and a renovated Church, all entirely free of debt.

Mr. Meeke wanted to leave the area as quietly as possible but there was a congregational gathering, at which he was presented with a purse of sovereigns. Mrs. Meeke was given a rose bowl. Then he found out that the Newry Presbytery intended to make him a presentation a few weeks later. He objected, asking that they should drop the whole idea, not because, as he said, he didn't appreciate it but because he didn't want all the fuss. Still they went ahead and presented him with a most unusual gift. It was an address in an album form, bound in crimson leather, gold tooled and with the leaves, leather tinged. The text of the address

was illuminated on two pages and the signatures of all the subscribers were in facsimile on two other pages. Beautiful water colour paintings of Kingsmills Presbyterian Church (interior and exterior), of the Manse and of the Mourne Mountains were also included. The work was all done by a firm in Belfast. Within the album were the signatures of thirty one ministers of Newry Presbytery both past and present — all of whom had worked alongside Mr. Meeke.

On his retirement, he went to live at Seaview, Warrenpoint. He worshipped in the church there and was a member of session for around twenty years. He also continued as Clerk of Newry Presbytery, holding this position for a total of forty years. Being the senior minister of the Church, he was still involved in the life of Kingsmills and attended various functions and meetings throughout his retirement.

#### Death of Mr. Meeke

On 18th July 1933, James Meeke passed away quietly at his home in Warrenpoint. He was in his ninety fourth year and up until his death he had a very clear mind.

His funeral, although stated to be private, was one of the largest ever seen in the area. The service in his home was conducted by Rev. J. Morrow, Warrenpoint and one of his best friends in the Newry Presbytery, Rev. R. J. Tweed from Clarkesbridge.

On arrival at Kingsmills, the cortege was met by a very large number of his former congregation, many of whom were in tears. The pulpit in the church was draped in black and as the flower covered coffin was borne into the church, the choir, with Mrs. Graham at the organ, sang "There's Glory in Emmanuel's Land". Then after prayers the congregation which included twenty one Presbyterian ministers, sang "Nearer My God to Thee".

William Elliott, a life long friend of Mr. Meeke and who was led to enter the ministry through his influence, travelled from his church in Co. Galway to give a very moving funeral address, a little of which is printed below.

*"So he has passed over, and the trumpets have sounded on the other side. Others will speak of him as a Presbyter and a greatly honoured brother for his personality and his high Christian character, and of the affection of the General Assembly for its honoured "father". Esteemed for his works' sake and for his earnest evangelical ministry, his personal piety and his genius for friendship, and with all this a rare toleration for those who differed from him in creed and forms of worship. He was great in body, but greater still in heart. All through his ministry he lived in this parish, but he had a much wider circle of influence and was known throughout the whole Church as a good servant of the*

*Master. Of him it can be said : "A prince and a great man hath fallen this day in Israel." Today he appeals out of the silence of the Eternal, and in this solemn moment his message, as it was from this pulpit as a Christian ambassador, 'Be ye reconciled to God. Faithful is He that calleth you'."*

Afterwards the remains were laid in a moss lined grave at the front of the church. Rev. Phineas McKee speaking at a memorial service in Warrenpoint, the following Sunday said :

*"There in front of the pulpit, we laid him in quiet state for a space. There in the peace and shelter of that beautiful burying ground which lies around the church and hard by the pathway, where the feet of all who pass in and pass out in days to come must tread, we laid his body in the grave."*

A memorial service was also held in Kingsmills on the following Sunday and Rev. E. G. Torrie travelled down from Coleraine to give the address, taking as his text Hebrews 6 : 12, "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises". This address included a summary of Mr. Meeke's work in Kingsmills and as a tribute to his memory part of it is inserted below.

"Of those who knew Rev. James Meeke as their minister many still remain, but many more are fallen asleep. Out there in the churchyard and in other places where human dust has mingled with its kindred clay, lie the graves of a great company. He baptized them; he taught them; he fed them with the living bread; he encouraged them to trust their Saviour and to live lives to His glory; he joined them together in marriage, and in Christ's name received their little ones; he shared their joys and sorrows : admonishing, guiding and comforting them; he showed them the way that leads heavenwards, and himself led the way. When the time of their departure came, in Christian hope he laid their bodies to rest till the great day when the trumpet shall sound and dead shall be raised incorruptible. Yes, memory links the name of James Meeke with your dear departed who are with Christ and awaiting your coming, and now he, too, has entered in. Beloved friend, to thee it was given many to save with thyself, and at the end of the day, O faithful shepherd, to come bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

Born in the year 1842, he was 22 years of age when he was ordained to the ministry and charged with the oversight of this congregation. He was an able preacher, and built up his people in the knowledge of the word, and inspired them with a love for their Church and a desire to improve their property. The manse was built and the schoolhouse, and renovation of this church was carried through. He took an interest in the affairs of his people. In later days he used to recall the enthusiasm of the meetings that were held in connection with fixity of tenure, fair rent, and free sale. His people's interest had his advocacy, and he gave them

good counsel for the life that now is as well as for that which is to come.

### Father of Presbytery

When he entered the Newry Presbytery there were 24 ministers in it; when he retired in 1913 from the active duties of the ministry they all had gone before him. A band of younger men were around him as his co-presbyters — to them their revered and trusted clerk and their beloved "father". He was a man of large and tolerant spirit; he recognised the worth of Christian character in those from whom he differed. He knew the Church of Christ to be a fellowship larger than one defined by denominational boundaries. At the same time he was a convinced and ardent believer in the validity and worth of the Church of our fathers. Christ is the King and Head and the life within her — upon all His servants has the Royal claim for the service they will render in loving fidelity and obedience. Right loyally he gave it.

In the Presbytery of Newry testimony will be borne to the faithful and willing service he rendered in the wider work of the Church. But in this service today it is around this place and district that our memories are lingering. These days past you have been recalling what manner of man he was. There are pictures rising up before your inward eyes of that venerate figure as he stood up in this pulpit to lead his people in worship before the throne of grace, and to preach to them the Word of the living Lord. Or again you have seen him crossing your fields, coming in at your doors, kneeling down to pray by the bedside of the sick or of the aged, gathering the little children around him and asking them their questions. What dear and tender memories cling around the life and work of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ.

### A Man of Trust

The Book says : "Man looketh at the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh at the heart." This is written to warn us against tolerating in ourselves any moral contradiction between that which we show to men and that which God sees within us. It does not exclude nor deny the possibility that the temple of the body may be worthy of the spirit within. He was a fine figure of a man; we remember his erect bearing, the fine and sure step of him, the nobility of his face. When we speak of such things we are feeling that they are symbols of the man he was in character and in life — a straight man, an upright man, resolute in decision, reliable in judgment, and of an honourable firmness in mind, in feeling and in motive. Thomas Elliott, of honoured memory, used often to say to me, "Mr. Meeke was a correct man." That summed him up. He was a man you could trust. No confidence of yours was ever betrayed by him, and when you sought his advice

you had learned by experience the wisdom of following it. He knew when to be silent and when to speak, and when he spoke his words had a luminous effect. Things that were dark and obscure before began to clear up and you saw your way, and if the way were still difficult your strong and steady faith in him encouraged you to accept it. For his own problems and those of his people he took audience of God. He waited in the silence until the guidance came, and when God gave it him, he spoke and acted with the sureness of a man who had hearkened to the Divine leading. There was a rugged strength in his voice that matched the strength of his character, but there were wonderful tones of sympathy and tenderness in it, in keeping with the warmth and kindness of his heart. There was a grace in the light of his eyes and in the firmness of his hand-clasp.

Sad for us that death should ever take the like of him from our midst, but thanks be to God for the long years he was spared to live, to be a blessing to his generation. "Truly the memory of the just is blessed." Of all whom we have known of good Christian men it has been given to few to manifest as he did the strength and gentleness and dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ. By indiscriminate usage, we cheapen the worth of that word "good". We have applied it at times to one and to another who, perhaps were not quite worthy of it. The word regains something of its first fine sincerity when we link it with him, for he was a good man.

### Familiar words

In preparing this tribute I found there were coming to me various familiar words out of the Book of God. It seemed as if these texts of Holy Scripture were finding illustration in him, such as this : "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord", and this : "The righteous, shall flourish like the palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the House of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age", and this : "The path of the just is as the shine-light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

For him the perfect day has come, his light shall go not down, but shall shine for ever and ever. Through the kindness of God, he was spared the trial of lingering illness and pain. But a few moments God's hand shaded his eyes to veil in mercy the brightness of the Divine glory awaiting him in Immanuel's land. And so he was taken in to lift up his eyes and see Christ face to face.

Today our loving thoughts go out to the bereaved family. She who came to this place long years ago the bride of her young husband, and through all the changeful experience of life, his steadfast helpmeet and comforter — now lingers in the valley of

the shadow. They were lovely and pleasant in their lives and in death will not be long divided. For her we pray, and for her dear ones to whom is coming sorrow upon sorrow, for them our hearts are full and our prayers go up to the God of all comfort."

At the end of the address, as a mark of respect for the memory of Mr. Meeke and in sympathy for his family, the congregation stood for a few moments silence before the benediction.

So ended a chapter in the life of Kingsmills, which had spanned almost seventy years. We cannot say that it ended in 1913. Indeed not; Mr. Meeke maintained a lively interest in his flock until the end. It is noticeable that he was present at all the main events in the church in his retirement years and he kept in touch with his congregation, sharing in their sorrows and joys.

Life was never quite the same in Kingsmills without Mr. Meeke at the head. He had achieved the respect of all the congregation — young and old, rich and poor. He could talk to any man or woman at any level. In his fifty years in active ministry in Kingsmills, he had soundly taught and trained the young men in the Bible Class and this bore fruit in the early part of the nineteenth century, when there was a great outreach from the church into the community. The elders at this time, who were only young boys when Mr. Meeke first came, had had a good grounding in the Scriptures. They were able to take a service and preach a sermon if and when they were required to do so. They could preach at meetings in the outlying districts or take over at holiday time or illness. They shared in the visiting of the congregation and were particularly attentive to the sick, the aged and poor in their districts.

The Kingsmills people could say that they were truly blessed to have had such a man as Mr. Meeke guiding them along the Christian path during all those years.

### The Meeke Family

In 1868, Mr. Meeke had married Margaret Craig, whose father Hugh, was a director of the famous and wealthy Craig Shipping Line in Belfast. Her brother Rev. D. H. Craig, was minister of Donegore Presbyterian Church.

They had three sons and three daughters, all born in the Manse. The family, the largest ever to inhabit the Manse, played a big part in the life of the Church, especially the girls. Jeannie was very musical and helped with the singing in the church. She married Rev. J. M. R. Dale, who was the minister in Mountnorris from 1893-1905. They then emigrated to Brisbane in Queensland but when war broke out in 1914, they returned to Britain and Mr. Dale served as an Army Chaplain being twice mentioned in despatches. He then became the first minister of a new church at Lancaster in the Presbytery of Liverpool. They were there only

eight years when Mrs. Dale became ill. She died within a month, on the 5th April 1928, aged fifty eight and the news came as a shock to her aged parents. Mr. Meeke wrote to one of the Kingsmills elders :

"There are many mysteries in this life of ours, the meaning of which we shall only know hereafter. But we believe, and there is great comfort in believing it, that our loved ones as well as ourselves are in the hands of Our Father in Heaven who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. We bow our heads and try in our hearts to say 'Not our wills but thine be done'."

The Rev. Dale died in 1933, five years later.

Annie married Rev. Samuel Waugh Chambers who was for nine years the minister of Cremore. He resigned in 1907 and they went to Holywood, Co. Down. Mrs. Chambers died in 1911 aged only thirty six and her husband later married another minister's daughter before emigrating to America, to take up a business career.

So two of Mr. Meeke's three daughters predeceased him. Isabel never married. She lived with her parents and cared for them in their old age.

The three sons all went to Belfast to complete their studies. James Alfred (Fred) the eldest, became a doctor. In 1906, he married a Miss Katie Houghton from Manchester, the wedding taking place in Kingsmills. Hugh Craig became a Presbyterian minister and chaplain in the First World War. (See page 243). William was a dentist in London. He married Miss Bessie Epps and their first son whom they called Hugh Craig Meeke was baptised in Kingsmills in 1908.

Away back in 1874, Mr. Meeke's brother William, died on the farm at Garvaghy so the family, consisting of his mother, father, brother and sister, sold up and moved to the Cottage at Lisadian. Within eight years three of them had died. Mr. Meeke's father took bronchitis and passed away in 1877 and his mother died in 1882. Both are buried in the family plot at the front of Garvaghy Parish graveyard. Mr. Meeke's younger brother, Moses, died tragically the year after his mother.

Moses had gained an M.A. degree from Queen's University and was licensed by the Presbyterian Church in 1872. He never actually went into the ministry but instead became an Inspector of National Schools. On the 27th September 1883, he was lost overboard when travelling between Dublin and Holyhead. He was only thirty three years old. As a memorial, the congregation erected what must be one of the most unusual obelisks to be found in any graveyard. It has a square polished granite base about fourteen feet high with a marble pedestal broken at the top. Half way up the column there is a wreath of flowers. One might be forgiven for thinking that this column had got broken at some stage but this is not the case. The memorial was intended

to be like that, to signify the broken unfinished life which was cut short in its prime. The inscription reads :

*"In loving remembrance of Moses Meeke, M.A., Inspector of National Schools, lost overboard between Dublin and Holyhead, 27th September 1883 aged thirty three years."*

*"Passed to where beyond these voices there is peace, no night there."*

Mr. Meeke's sister, Sarah, married Johnny Elliott, a colourful character who lived at the crossroads. Johnny and his wife played an important part in the life of the church for many years. Johnny was a member of the Church committee and was one of the first Church Trustees. He had a great interest in the property and was often at odds with the sexton and local builder, Robert Crozier. When Mrs. Elliott died in 1913, Johnny, who always had a mind of his own, erected a headstone and had the following unusual inscription inserted in which he referred to his wife by her maiden name :

*"In loving remembrance of Sarah Meeke, the dear and devoted wife of John Elliott of Lisadian, who died 27th March 1913."*

Rev. Meeke's wife passed away in the November after her husband and their daughter Isabel, in March 1960.

The Meeke family plot is right in front of the church with a simple granite stone erected as a memorial. The names of Mr. Meeke's children who died before him are engraved in the surround.



*The Meeke Family Plot at the front of the church with the small headstone erected to the Rev. Meeke and his family. To the top left hand side of this is the unusual memorial erected to Moses Meeke, the broken column signifying a broken unfinished life.*

## CHAPTER 8

### THE MANSE

The Manse was built in 1867. Indeed the foundation stone was laid in June of that year by Mr. William Harpur of Lisadian House. He was the land agent mentioned earlier during the Rev. Henry's ministry. By 1867, however, he was an old man — seventy five years of age and retired from this work. He was probably asked to perform this honour of laying the foundation stone because he had been Wilson's representative in the area for so many years and the ground for the building of the Manse had been given by Joseph Wilson. To mark the occasion Mr. Harpur was presented with a silver trowel which bears the inscription :

*"Presented to William Harpur Esq" by the Congregation of Kingsmills on the occasion of his laying the foundation stone of their Manse June 1867".*

This trowel is now in the possession of his great grandson, Mr. Roy Harpur. William Harpur died aged 82 in 1874 and his son William carried on as the land agent.



*The Silver Trowel presented to Wm. Harpur.*

## Mr. Alexander Whelan (the builder)

The contract to build the manse was given to a former Kingsmills man, Mr. Sandy Whelan. Sandy was the son of Tom Whelan who owned a very small farm on the Belleek side of what is now the "Wayside Inn". When he died in 1856, Sandy, who had no interest in the farm, set off for America where he had to pawn his clothes in order to get enough money to buy food.



*Alexander Whelan.*

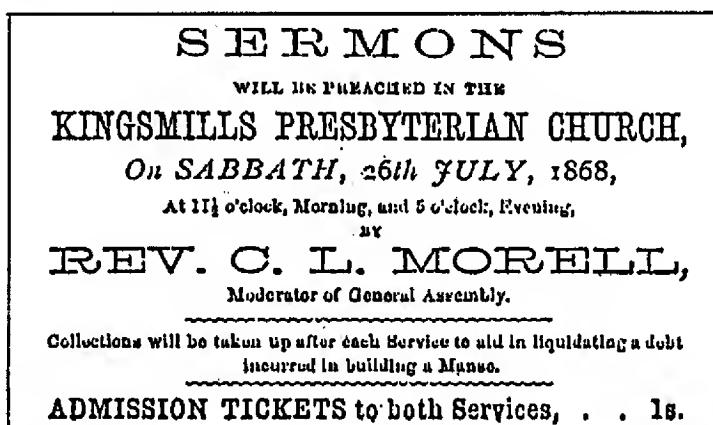
However he soon got a job serving his time as a joiner. After some years he came home and set up business in Canal Street, Newry. It was called the Newry Steam Joinery Works and a thriving trade was carried on there for many years. Mr. Whelan was involved in building many of the local manses at that time. He was renowned for having a long beard which stretched down to his knees.

The Whelan graveplot in Kingsmills is marked by a large headstone which Sandy erected to the memory of his parents. Unfortunately the stone got broken around the turn of this century and although it was fixed at the time, it has collapsed again. Mr. Whelan, himself, was buried in the grounds of St. Patrick's Church in Newry where he had worshipped following his return from the United States.

## The Finances Involved in the Building of the Manse

Finding a suitable builder was a relatively easy task when it came to erecting a Manse but financially it was a big undertaking for a congregation whose numbers were declining. A grant of £100 was given by the Church, Manse and School Fund of the General Assembly. This fund had been set up in 1860 in order to improve Church property. At that time only about one in twenty congregations possessed manses and many of the churches were in

poor condition. Kingsmills congregation raised £80 but there was still an outstanding debt amounting to £262. Special services were held to raise money with admission to these being by ticket. Below is an example of a ticket issued to gain admission to one of these Special services. The Moderator of the General Assembly was to be the preacher.



In those times another method of raising money fairly quickly was for the minister to go to the mainland, possibly Scotland, to try to collect funds. This, Mr. Meeke did in January 1869. After applying to the Presbytery for permission to do so, Mr. Meeke was out of Ireland until the beginning of May. Presumably he was able to bring home enough money to pay off the debt for no further mention is made of the matter.

#### The Manse During Mr. Meeke's Ministry

Mr. Meeke and his wife moved into the manse in early 1868 and it was in August of that year that their first child, Alfred, was born. By 1877 there were six young Meeke's running around the Manse. The new building was kept in first class order and soon the gardens and lawns were laid out. At the turn of the century the Manse grounds were the most beautiful in this part of the Country. The front lawn was edged with roses of all colours and in the middle of the lawn was a summer house done in trellis work. It was there until Mr. Graham's time. At the back of the Manse there was a good vegetable garden and an orchard. The young men of the congregation helped to maintain the grounds and the Meeke's employed a servant boy and girl.

The Manse farm was also enlarged during Mr. Meeke's ministry. It originally had only one three acre field but Mr. Meeke leased two more fields from Wilson, which brought the Manse to just over thirteen acres. As part of his retiring allowance he would have been entitled to the continued use of the Manse and its

## KINGSMILLS MANSE

*Photographed in 1987 (120 years after it was built).*



*Front view.*



*Side view.*

lands. He had spent a great deal of his own money on it — getting it fenced and drained and into reasonable order. However, he chose to relinquish all claims on the property on condition that the committee paid him £45 per year during his lifetime.

### The Manse Since 1914

During the war years with the Rev. Torrie at the battlefield and Mrs. Torrie and her son staying with relatives, the Manse was vacant for long spells. Despite this it remained in good order and the young men in the congregation kept the grounds neat and tidy.

When the Kerrs were living in the Manse they employed no permanent help, either in the house or on the farm. Mrs. Kerr was very keen that they should produce as much of their own food as possible. She had a small house built for hens so that they would have eggs and she was a very keen gardener. The Rev. Kerr decided to have a tennis court up at the Manse and he cleared the ground himself with a shovel and a wheelbarrow. The young people of the congregation had the use of this tennis court for a number of years.

Mr. Graham was the only minister, apart from Mr. Meeke, who had any real interest in the Manse Farm. He worked the land to maximum effect and made a good living from his sheep.

The Manse, itself, was in good order up until the 1950's. Repairs and renovations had been carried out during the vacant months in 1913, 1920 and 1927. However there appears to have been little done in the way of repairs after this. Mr. Graham was an elderly man living in the Manse with no wife or family and no doubt he was happy with it as it was. The Rev. D. H. Thompson was the last minister to live in the Manse. Since then there have been two tenants but the building has been uninhabited for the last six years or so.

The Surveyor's report in October 1954 listed a large number of defects in regard to the Manse and its outbuildings. A large number of slates were either broken or displaced and the chimneys were in need of repair. The porch roof was defective and the walls were very damp. In fact there was a lot of damp throughout the house. The grounds were over grown, gates were not on their hangings and the outbuildings were in bad repair.

Sixteen years later in June 1970 the same surveyor reported the following — "The grounds are generally in poor condition. The access road has a bad surface. The general condition is very similar to that noted at the inspection in 1954".

Eleven years later in March 1981 his report on the Manse read as follows — "The building and surrounding grounds present a dilapidated and neglected appearance. The grounds are in poor order. During the last thirty years the condition has deteriorated".

No structural repairs have been made to the Manse since and at the time of writing it is no longer habitable. A congregational meeting was held in 1985 when a decision was made to renovate it. In April the following year an appeal was made to the congregation to see if it would be possible to raise £18,000.00. It was felt that this amount combined with a grant of £7,650.00 would be sufficient to carry out the necessary renovations. When replies to the appeal were received it was found that 54 families and individuals had agreed to give £14,600.00. Now a year later steps are being taken to see if it would be possible to convert the building into a Youth Centre connected with the Presbyterian Church.



*Back view of Manse.*

## CHAPTER 9

### KINGSMILLS NATIONAL SCHOOL

Mr. Meeke was a man who was greatly interested in education. For many years he was the Convener of the Committee of Religious Education in the Newry Presbytery.

When the Manse was completed, his next project was to get a new school built. There was some idle land at the side of the church and it was decided to erect the building here. The congregation raised most of the money in the Spring of 1873 and with a grant of £50 from the Manse, School and Debt Extinction Fund of the General Assembly, there was enough money to start building.

A Mr. Whiteside, from Glenanne, was employed to do the work. He used blue quarry stones from Chamber's quarry at Tullyawe and worked long hours during the summer to get the building completed. The school room itself measured 30 feet by 20 feet. It had a wooden floor and the walls were plastered. It had six large windows, three at the back and three at the front. There was a fireplace at one end and the school furniture consisted of six, fourteen foot long desks, a teacher's desk and chair and a book-press. Strangely there was no blackboard. At one end of the building, there was a two up two down teacher's residence which at the time of writing is still standing.

There was much opposition to the building of a new school at Kingsmills, especially from the Rev. Finlay of Ballymoyer. He thought that there were plenty of schools in the area and that with a falling rural population, there was a danger of some of them having to close down. He wrote to the Kingsmills minister stating his views but Mr. Meeke was determined to go ahead with the project.

On Wednesday, 1st October 1873, Kingsmills School opened its doors and by the following Monday, there were sixty two children on the roll — thirty one boys and thirty one girls. School lasted from 10.00 a.m. — 3.00 p.m. The school master was a seventeen year old youth called James Whiteside (a relative of the builder). It is hard to know how he got the job for he had no teacher training and no experience of running a school. Mr. Meeke was the local Manager. The General Lesson was hung on the wall. This was issued from 1835 onwards by the Commissioners for National Education in Ireland with the requirement "that the principles of the Lesson be strictly inculcated in all schools admitted into connexion with them".

## GENERAL LESSON

CHRISTIANS should endeavour, as the Apostle Paul commands them, to live peaceably with all men (Romans, c. 12 v. 18), even with those of a different religious persuasion.

Our SAVIOUR, CHRIST, commanded his Disciples to love one another. He taught them to love even their enemies, to bless those that cursed them, and to pray for those who persecuted them. He himself prayed for his murderers.

Many Men hold erroneous doctrines; but we ought not to hate or persecute them. We ought to hold fast what we are convinced is the truth; but not to treat harshly those who are in error. JESUS CHRIST did not intend his Religion to be forced on men by violent means. He would not allow his Disciples to fight for him.

If any persons treat us unkindly, we must not do the same to them; for Christ and His Apostles have taught us not to return evil for evil. If we would obey CHRIST, we must do to others, not as they do to us, but as we would wish them to do to us.

Quarrelling with our neighbours and abusing them, is not the way to convince them that we are in the right, and they in the wrong. It is more likely to convince them that we have not a Christian spirit.

We ought, by behaving gently and kindly to every one, to show ourselves followers of CHRIST, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. (1 Peter, c. 2, v. 23).

Issued,

November, 1863

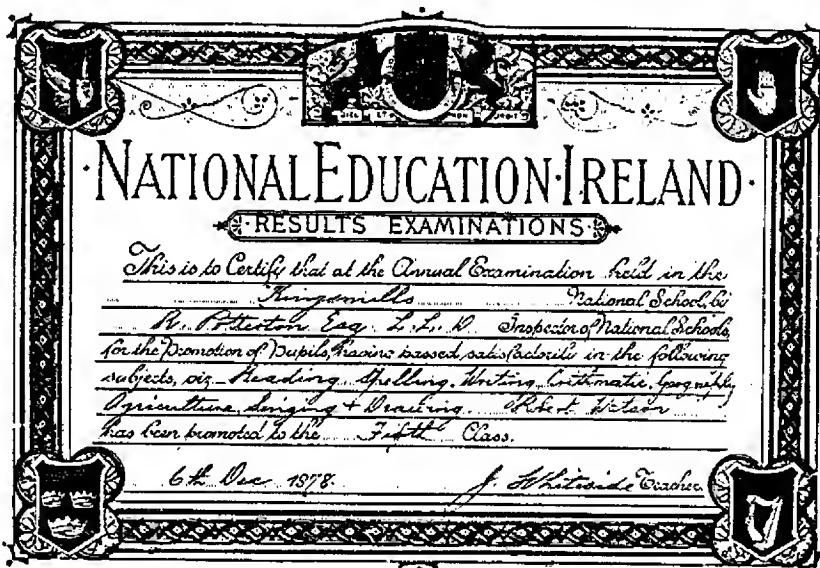
Issued from 1835 onwards by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland with the requirement :

'That the principles of the Lesson be strictly inculcated in all schools admitted into connexion with them'

The school was doing so well that, within a few months, Mr. Whiteside asked for another teacher. A nineteen year old temporary assistant arrived and she soon became his wife. Numbers increased steadily in the school and by 1887, there were 82 names on the roll. Mrs. Whiteside was no longer teaching and a local girl, Maggie Scott Hooks, a daughter of James Hooks from Creggans was in her place. Her salary at that time was £12 per year.

It is interesting to study the figures on the roll on a monthly basis. The numbers attending fell by half at harvest time, when it was busy on the farms and the best attendance was in the winter months, when things were quiet at home. There were always more boys on the roll than girls — parents not seeing the need to educate their daughters to the same extent as their sons.

The school inspectors paid regular visits and each year there was an examination held to assess whether or not a child should be placed in a higher class. If they passed they were awarded a certificate, such as the one below which was awarded to Robert Watson from Drumcrow, in 1878.



As can be seen, the subjects which were studied were — Reading, Spelling, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography, Singing and Drawing. Then there was Farming for the boys and Needlework for the girls. They learned how to do plain sewing and fancy lace work. Being able to knit was also important.



*One of the earliest photographs ever taken of Kings Mill National School.*

The Whiteside's lived in the school house but strangely never joined the Church. Mr. Whiteside was remembered as a strict disciplinarian, who wasn't afraid to use the cane. He laboured as master for about sixteen years until he and his wife were dismissed for intemperance.

The next principal of the school was Miss Tweedie from Sheeptown, outside Newry. She later married John McCormick from Divernagh and she continued teaching in the school until her death in 1906. The job was then carried on by Miss McAlea. She married another Kingsmills man, William Watson Rogers, from Eshwary and they later emigrated to Australia. For the next two years, Mr. Ferguson from Co. Antrim, was the master.

### The Hunters

When Mr. Ferguson resigned, the job was taken over by William Hunter, a Ballyhalbert man. He and his wife adapted well to the life in the area and over the years they devoted a great deal of time and energy to both the school and the church. They lived in the Cottage because when they arrived they had three children and the school house was small. One of these children died aged only seven in 1914 and two more children, Violet and Jeannie were born at Kingsmills and baptized in the church.

Mr. Hunter was only in the area for a matter of months, when he was elected on to the Church Committee, where he played a leading role until he left the district. He and his wife, both keen musicians, joined the choir and Mrs. Hunter was the first organist. Mr. Hunter was the precentor, prior to this.

The school, at this period, was divided into two with a teacher working in either end. The combined salary of Mr. and Mrs. Hunter was £4 per month. Although education itself was free, there was no such thing as school lunches. The children had to bring their own provisions and contribute to the heating in the school by bringing along firewood. Slates were used as writing material until around 1920, when writing books took their place. At this time there was no playground. Lunch breaks were spent out on the roadway, where there was little or no traffic and games like marbles or skittles could be played uninterrupted.

In the 1920's, as Intermediate Schools for older children, began to spring up, the National schools were then referred to as Public Elementary Schools.

The Hunters remained in Kingsmills until the Spring of 1924, when they moved to Maguiresbridge in Co. Fermanagh. They proved a big loss, not only to the church but to the community at large. The school had also lost one of its longest serving masters, Mr. Hunter having taught there for fourteen years.

In Loving Memory  
of  
MRS M'CORMACK,

*Who Died on 4th October, 1906.*

**TO THE CHILDREN OF KINGSMILL SCHOOL.**

No more her soothing voice is heard  
In Sabbath School or pew,  
No more the children gather round  
Their teacher kind and true..

She has fought for King and country,  
By faith was bravely led,  
Till she by death was conquered  
And numbered with the dead.

The King, He is Immanuel,  
A mighty King is He,  
By whom all Christians conquer,  
If led by Him they be.

The country, it is Heaven,  
That bright and better land,  
Where all is peace and concord  
And joy at God's right hand.

The foe is sin and satan,  
With all carnal lust,  
But she through faith has conquered,  
In Jesus placing trust.

T. M'CALDEN.

*A poem written in memory of Mrs. John McCormack, Divernagh (mother of Mr. Thomas McCormick). She was a teacher in both the day school and the Sabbath school at Kingsmills.*

## KINGSMILLS SCHOOL AROUND 1920



*Front row (left to right) — Archie McMurray, Joe Harrison, Maggie Graham, Lily McComb. Second row (left to right) — Violet Hunter, Sadie Freeburn (now Mrs. Cartmill), Lorraine Park, Lottie Freeburn, Susan Freeburn (now in Cloughreagh House), Winnie McComb, Sadie Day, Molly Day, Mary McMurray, Rachel McComb (now Mrs. Freeburn, Keadybeg), Agnes Herren. Third row (left to right) — Lily McMurray, Annie Sleeth, William Freeburn (living in Keadybeg), James McComb, Bobby Graham, Jimmy Sleeth, Bobby Moffatt, Ernie Harrison, Willie Graham. Back row (left to right) — Mrs. Hunter, Mary Hunter, Mary Sleeth, Minnie Moffatt (now Mrs. W. Hamilton, Windy Gap), Edith Harrison, Bessie Harrison, Willie Hunter, Joe Herron, Teddy Herron, Mr. Hunter.*

## KINGSMILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL (1924 – 1988)

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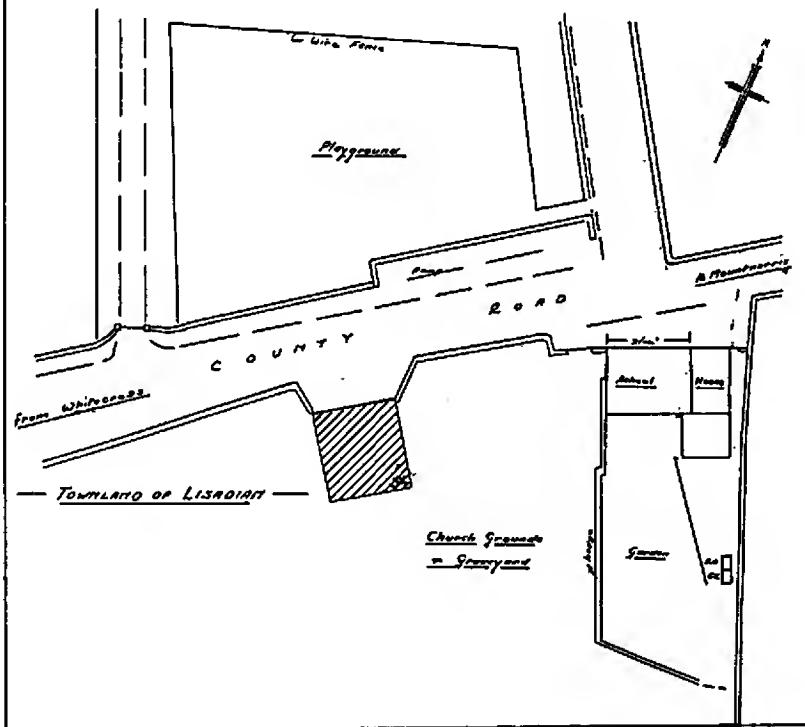
Following the departure of the Hunters, Kingsmills school experienced many staffing difficulties. The Cottage and school house were both occupied and there was little incentive for a family man to come to the area. Quite a few young teachers came and stayed for only short periods of time. They lodged with Mr. and Mrs. Simpson Elliott, who lived down the middle road. There was a Miss Clarke from Poyntzpass and a Miss McIlwaine and Miss Webb both from Portadown.

In 1927, there was a proposal by Bessbrook District School Committee for the erection of a new school at the Windy Gap, to replace the existing schools in Kingsmills, Lisnalea and Mountnorris. This idea was strongly opposed by the Markethill District School Committee and it was subsequently dropped.

By the 1930's there were only about thirty pupils attending Kingsmills. It was now a one-teacher school and this did nothing to help recruitment. However Miss S. E. Acheson was given the post of principal in 1933 and as numbers increased, she was allowed an assistant, Miss Andrews.

In November 1934, a congregational meeting was held and it was unanimously decided to transfer the school to the Co. Armagh Regional Education Committee. The Church refused to give up the school residence and this was another disadvantage when it came to recruiting staff. The transfer to the Education Committee came into effect on 1st July 1938, the church no longer having any direct say in the running of the school. It could still use the building outside school hours for congregational purposes free of expense, except for heating and lighting and should the school cease to be used as such, the property would revert to the Trustees of the Church.

KINGSMILLS P.E. SCHOOL AND GROUNDS.



In December 1939, Miss Andrews resigned and her position was not filled until September 1940, when a Miss Mary Uprichard became the assistant. She was followed by Mrs. R. McKeeman from Newtownhamilton and then a Mrs. Hughes.

In 1947, Mrs. Wright (formerly Miss Acheson) the Principal resigned after 14 years, to go to Ballynewry Primary School. She was replaced by Mr. R. T. Moffett who stayed only one year. Then there was Mr. J. T. Gillespie who married the assistant, Miss Crozier and they left the area in 1951.

Recruitment again proved difficult but by December of that year Mr. Skipworth arrived and he had a temporary assistant called Miss Harrison. They only stayed a couple of years being replaced by Miss Burrows from Armagh as principal and Miss Dodds (now Mrs. McWhirter) from Newry as assistant. She was followed by Miss Sloan (now Mrs. Henning) and Miss Shepherd (now Mrs. Mackey). Miss Burrows remained in her post until her retirement in the early sixties. During her period a new school was built about a quarter of a mile from the church on the Lisnalea side. A parent's meeting had been held in June 1955 to discuss the proposal to erect a new building. The old school was, in the words of the Director of Education, "out of date and should be replaced by a new building". So ground was purchased from Mr. David Rogers and the school was opened in September 1958. The red brick building consisted of two classrooms and a kitchen. It was a big change from the old building with central heating, electric lighting and hygienic toilet and washing facilities. The old school then reverted back to the church proving to be a useful building for various meetings. It was in use until it was knocked down on the 21st June 1978, to make way for the building of the Church Hall. The Session House was also demolished at the same time.

In 1965, Mrs. D. Gray became principal and she remained in the post for eleven years. Mrs. Murphy, wife of the Ballymoyer rector, Miss Wilson and Miss Trimble were assistants during her time. Mr. Hunniford came in 1975 and remained for just two years, Miss Gracey and Mrs. Scoley assisting him. Mrs. Howard has been the principal since this time. She has worked almost single handed in the past ten years and with numbers increasing slightly in the last year or two, an assistant teacher, Mrs. Morton has been appointed. At the beginning of the school year 1987/88 there were 34 pupils on the roll and a mobile classroom has been erected. This year, for the first time ever, Mrs. Howard hopes to take a group of the children to the mainland for a holiday. So things are looking up and while many schools in the district have long since closed their doors, the school which Mr. Meeke was determined to build, is still very much alive — 120 years later.

KINGSMILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL 1949  
*(the names are shown opposite)*



## KINGSMILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL 1949

### Teachers :

(Extreme left) Mrs. J. Cochrane, Mountnorris  
(Extreme right) Mr. Gillespie, Armagh (principal)

### Front row ( left to right ) :

Wilbur Cartmill, Glenanne	Etta Liggett, Divernagh
John King, Tullyhappy	June Patton, Carrickananny
Bertie Chambers, Carrickananny	Maurice Freeburn, Keadybeg
Beth Elliott, Keadybeg (dec.)	Bertie Freeburn, Keadybeg
Madge Williamson, Keadybeg (Canada)	

### Second row (left to right) :

Sylvia Cartmill, Glenanne	Jean Elliott, Five Mile Hill
Mildred Crozier, Maytown	Anna Lockhart, Tullyhappy
Hilary McDowell, Maytown	Margaret Herron, Lisadian
Rita Herron, Lisadian	Myrna Patton, Carrickananny
Dorothy Lockhart, Tullyhappy	Lilian Halliday, Five Mile Hill
Roberta McClelland, Keadybeg	

### Third row (left to right) :

Noel Crozier, Lisadian	Frances McDowell, Maytown
Neville Hamilton, Lisalea	Brian Culbert, Maytown
Thomas Moffett, Lisadian (dec.)	Thomas Elliott, Keadybeg (dec.)
Bobbie Hamilton, Lisalea	John Chambers, Carrickananny (dec.)
Jim Lockhart, Tullyhappy	Mervyn Crozier, Lisadian
Betty Irvine, Hillhead, Mountnorris	Robert Lockhart, Tullyhappy (dec.)

### Back row (left to right) :

Jackie Herron, Lisadian	Jim Crozier, Lisalea
Bobby Chambers, Carrickananny	Samuel Irwin, Keadybeg
Sam Hamilton, Lisalea	Danny Wallace, Rathcarbery
Billy Herron, Lisadian	Samuel Wallace, Rathcarbery
Samuel Herron, Lisadian	Robert Moffett, Lisadian

## KINGSMILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL 1986



*Back row (left to right) — Mrs. Morton (teacher), Brian Murphy, Keith Patton, Robert Gordon, Jonathon Ross, Jill Henning, Rosemary Hamilton, Rodney Cartmill, Lynda Wallace, Linda Hamilton, Nigel Andrews, Alan Henning, Mrs. A. Murphy (caretaker). Middle row (left to right) — Paul Shields, Jonathon Douglas, Robert Hamilton, Gavin Patterson, Trevor Ross, Christine Ross, Wayne Brown, Andre Bradley. Front row (left to right) — Jeffrey Cartmill, Lorraine Shields, Norman Hamilton, Rodney McCullough, Donna McCullough, Stuart Murphy, Helen Donaldson, Andrew Douglas, Neil Brown, Mrs. Howard (principal).*

KINGSMILLS OLD SCHOOL 1966



KINGSMILLS NEW SCHOOL 1987



## CHAPTER 10

### THE GROWTH OF WHITECROSS

Today the population of Whitecross is around 350 but a hundred years ago there were only a few houses there. In 1864 Griffith's "General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland" mentions "The White Cross" as part of over sixty acres of land owned by Richard Garland. There were only eight dwelling houses in the entire townland of Corlat and to all, except one of these, were attached sizeable farms — all rented from the Synnot Estate.

Shortly after this survey was taken a block of single storey houses was built attached to Garland's house. A Post Office was opened up in one of these as well as a General Store and Public House. By 1888 a family called Deighan was running this whole enterprise very successfully and, as has been mentioned earlier, they had even got a bakery going, delivering fresh bread daily around the countryside.

In 1894, the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society (IAOS) was founded. This was really an Irish Co-Operative movement and one of the first Co-Ops they set up was in Whitecross, taking over Deighan's Shop. Many of the local farmers bought shares. They sent their milk, eggs and poultry to the Co-Op and bought their goods in the shop. There were milk depots at Derrycughan and Tullyogallaghan (above Belleek) where the farmers in those districts left their milk to be collected. The butter made at Whitecross won many prizes at Shows.

All this trade gave employment to local people and encouraged the building of houses. So the 'village' of Whitecross actually came into being around the turn of the century.

An Agricultural Bank was established in 1899 and in 1902 the Whitecross Poultry Society was formed. John Macdermott was the General Manager of the Co-Operative and he worked extremely hard to build it up. By 1908 it was one of the leading Co-Ops in Ireland. In that year the Pembroke Irish Charities decided to grant the IAOS the sum of £1,500 towards the erection of six village halls in the districts where Co-Operatives had been instrumental in improving the social as well as the material well being of the people. They selected six Societies out of twenty nine applicants to receive grants of £200 each. Of these, two were in the North and one was Whitecross. A Village Hall was built near the creamery on the Ballymoyer Road. It was in use until the 1940's.

Macdermott built up a good working relationship with the local farmers. He was considered by the IAOS to be their best Manager



*View of Whitecross Co-Operative which was in the yard behind the shop.  
It shows the milk churns being unloaded. (Taken in the 1920's).*

WHITECROSS, CO. ARMAGH



*Whitecross around the outbreak of the First World War showing Garland's House covered with ivy on the left hand side.*

and the Co-Op at Whitecross to be the most go-ahead. He encouraged farmers to make use of the veterinary services provided by the IAOS and also the credit facilities available for replacing or expanding their herds.

In 1916, John Macdermott gave up his job as manager and bought a shop in Dundalk. After this things were not the same. The creamery continued to function until about 1927 when it became bankrupt and was taken over by Fane Valley. In the late thirties they built a new creamery about a mile up the Ballymoyer Road but in 1944 they closed down completely.

Robert Doran, a member of Kingsmills, took over the shop at Whitecross in 1929 and he continued to run it until his retirement at the end of 1972. The shop was used a great deal by the Church over the years with the oil for the lamps and other items for repairs etc. being bought there.

Mr. Doran was Church Secretary for thirty years and when he resigned in 1956 he was presented with an inscribed clock.

Richard Garland's house was converted into a Police-Station in 1921 and the Police Stations in Belleek and Mountnorris were closed down. It was manned by a sergeant and four policemen. One of the first things that was done to secure the property was to make an eleven foot division between Garland's house and the adjoining premises. In the early 1930's a sergeant's residence was built. It is still standing but is now used as a private dwelling. The Police Station closed down in the early seventies and the property was sold. Since then it was bombed and then demolished to make way for a Public House.

## CHAPTER 11

### THE WAR YEARS

Rev. E. G. Torrie (1914 - 20)



Following Mr. Meeke's retirement, the Church was placed in the charge of Rev. Mulligan, the Minister of First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass and it remained vacant until the Autumn of 1913. By then there were seven licentiates or ministers who were showing an interest in the vacancy but of these, only two preached trial sermons — a Mr. Waddell and then on the first Sunday of 1914, a Mr. Torrie.

He chose as his text, "I will arise and go to my Father" — words from the parable of the Prodigal Son. His preaching was so firm and forthright that the Congregation gave him a unanimous call at a meeting the next evening. Edwin George Torrie, in coming to Kingsmills, was a long way from his home. He was a son of Adam F. Torrie, a Scottish businessman who came to Ireland in the 1800's and started a tea-importing business in Limerick.

He also spent some time in Dublin and while there Edwin was born on 7th March 1886. Indeed the house is still standing in Drumcondra on the road north to Drogheda. The family then moved their business to Waterford and it was in that city that the

young Edwin received his early education. His father then sent him to George Watson's School in Edinburgh. Returning to Ireland he attended the old Queen's College in Belfast (later Queen's University) where he obtained his B.A. Degree. He then trained in theology in Assembly's College. As well as this he spent some time at the Halle University in Germany where he became a fluent German speaker.

His first pastoral work was as assistant in Albert Street, Belfast (now West Kirk) to Dr. Robert James Porter who had been born and reared in Lattview House, Mullaghglass and who had been a member of the Jerretspass Congregation. Dr. Porter's mother Mary was a daughter of William Simpson Dillon (Tullyhappy) a member of Kingsmills. So knowing a fair bit about the area, Dr. Porter encouraged Mr. Torrie to accept the call. This he did and the date of the ordination service was set for 24th February, 1914.

### The Ordination

This was a big event in the Church with very few of the Congregation having any experience of such a thing. The last ordination service had been held fifty years previously when Mr. Meeke came to Kingsmills, so a lot of preparation was needed.

From the beginning of the month the Session and Committee were very busy organising the SOIREE which was timed for 7 p.m. on the evening of the 24th. Invitations were sent out and the ladies, who were specially chosen for the job, met to arrange for the ordination dinner. This was to be a sit-down meal in the School House for about seventy invited guests.

The Soiree was to be held in the Church. It was for the ordinary members of the Congregation. Twenty dozen cups and one and a half dozen jugs were ordered. Extra lamps were brought from Whitecross. Two pounds of tea and two stones of sugar were ordered from Auterson's Shop in Newry and three and a half dozen fruit loaves and one dozen seed loaves were collected from Willis' Bakery in the town — no fancy buns or home made cakes!

So the ordination evening arrived. The proceedings began with the singing of the National Anthem. Mr. Meeke was there and he spoke of his past memories and his hopes for the future under Mr. Torrie's Ministry. Mr. Torrie, in turn, said that it was not easy for him, a young and inexperienced Minister to follow such a man — "But", he said "of one thing you can be sure — there will be no change in the message which I shall bring to you, that is one of the abiding timeless things, I shall try to voice that message which sounds across the chasm of nineteen centuries — the Gospel of the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. As I set upon my life work, I determine to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified".

Mr. Torrie's father had travelled up from Waterford along with the Minister of the Church there. They both spoke at the ordination. Rev. John Patterson who had been brought up in Kingsmills also spoke as well as many local dignitaries and Ministers.

### Life in the Area for the New Minister

When a new man comes to live in the Manse, it is often necessary to have some repair work carried out and this was the case in Kingsmills in 1914. Mr. Meeke, writing to an elder a few weeks before the ordination suggested that a bathroom be put in the Manse. "You are aware that no Manse is without one", he said. "We managed without one because our family were not living at home. The cost will not be great and the money could be borrowed for a year or so. I would like to see the new Minister well started".

Mr. Meeke's advice was taken. A bath and a new range were bought at a total cost of less than £40, this money being borrowed for a year from a member of Committee. Robert Crozier installed them.

Soon after his arrival at Kingsmills, Mr. Torrie married a Miss Agnes Gilmer from Crawfordsburn and they settled down to work among the Congregation. They fitted in very well and took a keen interest in both the spiritual and material welfare of the people. Mr. Torrie visited and got to know the problems and concerns of individuals. However he had only been in the area a matter of months when War was declared in August 1914.

### The First World War

The community around Kingsmills were not unduly concerned with the news that Britain was going to War. Many young people saw it as a challenge and an opportunity to see a bit more of life. However, those who came back four years later were sadly disillusioned. Many of their friends never returned. While they were away, Mr. Torrie kept them in touch with their Church by writing constantly to them. It wasn't long however until he, himself, felt the need to join the war effort. This he did in May 1916 serving right through to the end in 1918. He was a Private in the Royal Army Medical Corps. based mostly in France but he was able to return to Kingsmills at those times when he was on leave. He was home in November, 1916, May, 1917 and Christmas 1917. After that break he was not back again until June 1919 when he finally returned to recommence his duties. The reason for his late return was that, being a fluent German speaker he was used as an interpreter in the Army of Occupation. One son was born to the Torries in Kingsmills — Edwin Cecil. He was baptised by Mr. Meeke in May, 1916 shortly before his father left for War. Mrs. Torrie and Cecil went to stay with relatives for most of the time when her husband was away.

## Members of the Congregation who fell or served in the War

By the end of the War Kingsmills had lost six young men at the battle front and at least twenty seven others from the Congregation saw War service of one kind or another. The only reminder that we as a Congregation have of them are their names engraved on the two memorial stained glass windows at the upper end of the Church on either side of the Pulpit. (See page 149). However, with the help of relatives and friends it has been possible to say a little about each one of these men and women who contributed, in their own way, to the freedom of Europe.

### THOSE WHO FELL IN ACTION

**Private William McKnight (Reg. No. 8046)** He was a son of William and Margaret Jane McKnight from Drumhoney and he was born on 2nd May, 1886. When war broke out he went into Newry and enlisted in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. He was serving with the Second Battalion for only ten days in France when he was fatally wounded by the enemy on 14th November, 1914. His body lies in the Ploegsteert Memorial in Belgium, (Panel No. 5).

**Private Robert McCaldin (Reg. No. 17814)** He was born in 1868, a son of Mr. & Mrs. Hugh McCaldin from Drumcrow. He was working in the coal mines in Scotland when war broke out and he enlisted in Hamilton, Lanarkshire. He served in the First Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers and died of wounds on 4th June 1915 in Belgium. He is buried there in Vlamertingne Cemetery (Plot 1 Row G, Grave 10).

**Sergeant William John Andrews (Reg. No. 757004)** He was the second son of William and Catherine Andrews from Carrowmannon and he was born on 10th October 1878. As a young man he emigrated to Canada, where he took up a trade as a wire drawer and in November 1915 he enlisted in Hamilton, Ontario with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He served in France and while there gained the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. He was home on leave at Belleek once during the war in the winter of 1918. At the end of the war his unit returned to England and when stationed at the depot in Whitley, Yorkshire he contracted pneumonia. He died on the 3rd February 1919 and was buried in St. Mary's Churchyard, Bramshott, Hampshire (Plot 3, Row D, Grave 24).

**Sergeant William Alexander King (Reg. No. 2905)** He was born on New Year's Day 1891, a son of John and Mary King from Lurgana. He was, for a time on the staff of Guinness and Son, Dublin, as a dispenser. On 1st February 1915, he signed up for



*Rev. E. G. Torrie*



*James McMullen*



*Robert McMullen*



*Rev. Hugh Craig Mecke*



*Robert Williamson*



*William McMullen*



*Thomas H. Edgar*



*Thomas Moffett*



*John Adams*



*David Crozier*



*John King*



*William J. Andrews*



*Robert J. Crozier*



*Moses Andrews*



*Martha A. Elliott*



*Selina R. Elliott*

service enlisting in the 6th (Pertshire) Division of the Black Watch. He was killed in action in France on 30th July 1916, his body being buried in the Caterpillar Valley Cemetery in that country. (Plot 13, Row J, Grave 8).

**Private John Donaldson King** (Reg. No. 41302) He was a younger brother of William being born on 17th October, 1892 and he worked at home on the family farm. Midway through the war, he decided to join up. He went into Newry and enlisted in the North Irish Horse. Soon he was at the front and in the thick of the fighting. At the beginning of November 1917, the King family were sent word that John was missing, believed killed in a raid on Belgium. This blow came just fifteen months after the death of his brother. His body was later recovered and buried in Cambrai East Military Cemetery, France (Plot 7, Row B, Grave 2).

**Private William Rantin** (Reg. No. 438289) He was born in 1889, the third son of William and Mary Jane Rantin from Tullyhappy. As a young man he emigrated to Canada but he wasn't there very long when war broke out in Europe. He enlisted on the 25th March 1915 at Port Arthur, Ontario and began service with 3rd Division, Canadian Gun Company. He arrived in England in December that year and in February 1916 he was sent to the battle front in France. While serving there he gained the British War Medal and the Victory Medal. The following year saw him back in England and stationed at Bramshott in the Midlands. While there on the evening of 1st June 1917, he fell from a barracks window and was taken to hospital in Buxton where he later died. His body was brought home to Tullyhappy and he was buried in the Churchyard at Kingsmills (Grave 71). The headstone was erected by the War Graves Commission and they continue to contribute to the upkeep of the grave.

## THOSE WHO SERVED

**Rev. Hugh Meeke and his wife** (See Page 243).

**William Meeke (L.D.S.)** He was a Lieutenant in the Royal Army Medical Corps.

**Isabel Meeke** — a sister of Hugh and William. She served as a nurse during the War.

**Moses Andrews** — brother of William John who died in the War. He had gone to Canada prior to 1914. In November 1916 he enlisted in the 245th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force and he saw service in France. Following the end of the war he returned to Montreal where he lived until his death in 1931 aged forty-five. His wife, now 92 years old is still alive and living in Canada.

**Martin Andrews** — he was the twin brother of Moses. They were born in November 1885. He served with the North Irish Horse and came home unscathed. On his return to Carrowmannon he worked on the family farm. He died in 1932, one year after his brother, aged only forty-six.

**Thomas H. Edgar** He was a son of John and Isabella Edgar and he was born in Drumhoney in 1893. When war broke out he enlisted with the North Irish Horse and rose to the rank of Sergeant. After the fighting was over he returned home and worked in a garage in Newry for a time before he emigrated to Australia in 1928. There he met and married a Miss Jane Hadden from Glenanne. They returned to this district in 1931 and he took up farming.

**Rev. E. G. Torrie** (See Page 134).

**Thomas McKnight** He was a son of William and Mary McKnight from Drumhoney and a brother of William who was killed in service. He was born in 1880 and he joined in the war effort with his brother. When William was killed Thomas was given permission to leave the army. He was a valued member of the Church choir for many years and he also played a big part in Ballymoyer Flute Band.

**John Adams** He was a son of John and Mary Ann Adams, Lisadian and he was born in 1890. He was also a cousin of the McKnights. During the war he fought with the 9th Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers and for his bravery at Passchendale he received the Military Medal. He was twice wounded and once gassed and the only battle he did not take part in with his famous Ulster Division was that of the Somme on 1st July, 1916, for he had been wounded in May of that year. He was discharged in 1919 when he had attained the rank of Acting Company Sergeant-Major and he was suffering from war injuries. In 1922 he joined the Special Constabulary rising to Head Constable. When it was disbanded in 1926 he became a Sergeant Instructor with the 'B' Specials and in 1941 he was appointed Adjutant. In 1952 he was awarded the M.B.E. and four years later he became a Justice of the Peace. He was a leading loyalist in the County and as well as this he was Clerk of Session in Druminnis Presbyterian Church. He died in 1971.

**Robert Patterson** He was a son of Hugh S. and Elizabeth Patterson from Lurgana and he was a Private in the North Irish Horse. On his return from the battlefield he contracted tuberculosis and he died in 1923.

**William Watson** He was a son of John and Elizabeth Watson from Belleek. He was born in 1897 and served as a Private in the Royal Irish Rifles.

**Herbert J. Harrison** He was a son of James and Jane Harrison from Tullywinney and he was born in 1894. Prior to the war he had emigrated to Canada and he then enlisted in the Canadian Infantry where he rose to the rank of Sergeant. After the war he returned to Canada.

**Annie Harrison** — his sister nursed during the war years and then emigrated to America with her twin sister, Jeannie.

**Robert J. Crozier** He was a son of Robert and Susan Crozier and was born at Lisadian in 1896. He joined the 9th Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers and fought in France for a short time, rising to the rank of Sergeant. He later joined the R.I.C.

**David Crozier** — his brother was born in 1900. He enlisted in the Royal Irish Rifles just as the war was coming to an end. He later became the sexton of Kingsmills Church and being a builder by trade he did a lot of work on the Church property throughout his life. He died in 1980.

**Albert Crozier** He was born in 1902 at Divernagh, the son of William and Elizabeth Crozier. He was only sixteen years old when he joined the Royal Irish Rifles and as war was coming to an end he saw no service.

**Robert T. Crozier** — an older brother of Albert. He also joined the Royal Irish Rifles during the latter stages of the war.

**Robert, James and William McMullen** were all sons of William and Jane McMullen and they were born in Glasgow where their father had gone to find work. He returned after some years to live at Ballymoyer and this is where the children were brought up.

Robert emigrated to Canada in 1912 and joined the staff of Ontario Reformatory. In 1915 he joined the Third Division of the Canadian Infantry and served in France for over four years. He was with the Canadian Army of Occupation in Germany. When war broke out again in 1939 he served as a Flight Lieutenant with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

James served with the British Forces in the First World War and spent a considerable time in the Armaments Division of Armstrong Whitworth. In 1926 he emigrated to Canada and spent ten years on the staff of the Ontario Reformatory. Returning to Ireland in 1936, he took up farming in Rathcarbery and continued in this work until his death in 1965.

William also served with the British Forces in the 1914 - 18 War. He later joined the R.U.C. and during most of his long service, was stationed in Belfast.

**Selina and Martha Elliott** were the daughters of Thomas and Selina Elliott from Rathcarbery. Selina taught for a few years in Kingsmills School before becoming a nurse. She served in the Military Hospitals in the North of England during the war years. On her return to Northern Ireland she became ill and the remainder of her life was spent in hospital. She died in 1950.

**Martha** was attached to the Queen Alexander Imperial Nursing Service and she continued nursing for many years after the war. She died in 1958.

**Annie Elliott** was a cousin of the previous two nurses, being a daughter of David and Annie Elliott from Drumherriff. She was born in October 1890 and nursed in England during the war years. She later married a Mr. Kerr and she died in New Zealand in 1961.

**Robert Williamson** He was a son of Robert and Annie Williamson from Rathcarbery and he was born in 1897. He served in 'A' Company, Royal Irish Rifles, stationed in Salisbury. Following the war he spent a number of years in Newcastle upon Tyne and on his return to Northern Ireland he took up farming. He died at Hillsborough on 28th October 1976.

**Samuel Moffett** He was a son of Thomas and Margaret Moffett and he was born in 1893 in the townland of Lisadian. He was a Corporal in the Royal Irish Rifles and took part in the famous charge at the Somme on 1st July 1916 where he was fortunate in receiving only leg wounds. He returned home and worked in Newry for many years.

**Thomas Moffett** his younger brother also served in France with the Royal Irish Rifles.

### **Congregational Life during the War Years**

Despite having their Minister at the battlefield, life continued fairly normally in the Congregation. Other Ministers and students filled the pulpit and from time to time the elders also helped out.

There was a Visitation of Presbytery on 4th July 1916. The Minister and people were congratulated on their faithfulness. There had been a substantial increase in the stipend giving and the Church property was in good condition. The only criticism was in the small number of children attending Sunday School. Committee meetings still continued to be dominated by discussion of the Church property and how best to maintain it.

### **Committee Members During The War Years (including Elders)**

Robert Harpur, John W. Dillon, John Boardman, Simpson Elliott, Hugh S. Patterson, James Patterson, James Bell, Robert Watson,

William M. Hunter, James Harrison, John Elliott, Thomas A. Elliott, John McCormick, Robert S. Rogers, John King.

Before Mr. Torrie returned from Europe in June 1919 a new Committee was elected. These men were —

William King, Samuel King, William Patton, David Elliott, Martin Andrews, Robert Elliott, David Cartmill, Acheson Elliott, W. G. Greer, Robert Harrison, Robert Patterson, James King and Thomas King.

Mr. Torrie welcomed them all at a meeting on 27th June 1919. A new Church secretary however, had to be found as James Bell, Lisadian, who had held that position for six years, had sold his farm and moved to Portnelligan near Tynan. So William Hunter, the School Master was elected to the post.

### The Church Picnic

One innovation in the Church after the war was a Congregational Picnic. Prior to this there was the games evening in the field at the Crossroads. But now it was hoped that the Congregation would travel to Markethill Demense and the date was set for this first expedition to take place on 9th July 1919 at 10 o'clock.

There was great debate at Committee level about the route they should travel. Finally it was decided that it would be better to travel by the Armagh Road rather than go by the Windy Gap.

Ham, bread, butter, tea and sugar were bought and a boiler was collected. Contributions towards picnic expenses were voluntary. It seems to have been a most successful day and everyone returned safe and sound.

### Ulster Farmers Union — Kingsmills Branch

The Ulster Farmers Union was founded in 1917 with its aim being to 'consolidate the farmers of Ulster into one strong organisation'. Just as today, they faced problems of all kinds, especially on the marketing side and more especially with the grading and selling of their main crop — flax.

In 1919 a branch of the U.F.U. was formed in Kingsmills, with meetings being held monthly in the School room.

Mr. Felix A. McKeown J.P. was elected Chairman and Master Hunter was the Secretary. The annual subscription appears to have been five shillings (25p). A meeting held on Friday 16th January 1920 was addressed by a Mr. Samuel Monaghan, a delegate to a Council meeting in Belfast. There were complaints about bacon in the shops having risen in price by 3d. (just over 1p) per lb. when the price of pork paid to the farmer was so small.

Meetings continued through 1920 but with less frequency and it appears that by 1921 the Kingsmills branch had faded out

# Ulster Farmers' Union.

— FOUNDED 1817. —

—  
Kingsmills

BRANCH.

## — OBJECT : —

**To consolidate the Farmers  
of Ulster into One Strong  
Organisation.**

## Member's Card.

Register No. 196

☞ Not Transferable to any other person.

altogether, members possibly transferring to the Newry District Farmers Association.

There is an account of an address given to this group by a Mr. Samuel Wallace from Kingsmills after he had attended a Conference in Belfast in April 1921 and after this there is no further mention of the branch.

### Mr. Torrie's Call to Coleraine

In July 1920 the Congregation were asked to vote on two important issues — the election of elders and the introduction of music in the Church. The vote for the eldership was not conclusive — only two out of four were prepared to accept the position. In regard to the organ only forty seven people voted — 41 in favour of its introduction and six against.

While these problems were being sorted out another one arose when Mr. Torrie received a call from Terrace Row Church in Coleraine. He accepted and left the following month. At a Committee meeting on the 10th August he was presented with a cheque for £26.8.0 from the Congregation, but there was no big social evening to mark his farewell. Instead Mr. Torrie preached a very moving and memorable farewell sermon, choosing as his

text — “Finally brethren, farewell” from II Corinthians 13 : 11. Below is an extract from his sermon. He said — “In all the world there is no more responsible task, no more weighty commission, than that of being entrusted with the Gospel of God’s grace in Christ Jesus to sinful men. Ministers are the messengers of God, commissioned thereto and woe unto them if they preach not the Gospel. I charge you to live as becomes the Gospel of Christ, to walk as children of the light and I commend you to God and to the word of his Grace”. He appealed to them to accept Christ that day and left them with the words — “Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near, let the wicked forsake his way and the righteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.”

So another era had come to an end for the Kingsmills people. They had lost a Minister who never failed to point them on the Christian path. Older people in the Congregation remember him for his great command of the English language especially in his pulpit prayers. He was also very musical, his main interest outside his work.

After going to Coleraine, Mr. Torrie continued to keep in contact with the Kingsmills folk. He had a car and from time to time came down on visits. On one occasion he returned to Coleraine on a Friday morning from a holiday in Scotland and drove to Waterford that evening to collect his sons. He motored back on the Tuesday, calling off with a family at Kingsmills and then drove on to Coleraine that night — a round trip of two hundred and sixty miles and quite a journey in these days, never mind over sixty years ago.

He remained in Terrace Row, Coleraine until his retirement in 1953 when he and his wife went to live at Orlock Head, Co. Down.

By seniority he eventually became father of the Assembly. He died in 1975 in his ninetieth year having survived his wife by seven years. He is buried in Clandeboye graveyard.

### **The Torrie Family**

As was mentioned earlier the Torries had one son, Cecil, when at Kingsmills. Three more children were born to them in Coleraine and all four are still alive.

Cecil is a Doctor and lives in Cullybackey. He married a Miss Hodggett, whose father, Edward, was the proprietor of the Newry Reporter.

Ronald is a Minister, in the Church of Scotland, near Elgin.

Robin is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the family Firm in Waterford and their sister Hazel (Mrs. Topping) is a retired School Teacher living in Scotland.

## CHAPTER 12

# POST WAR TO THE FIFTIES

### Rev. W. J. Kerr (1921 - 1927)

Kingsmills remained vacant for only seven months following Mr. Torrie's departure. The fifth minister of the Church was to be Rev. William John Kerr.



He was born at Craignamaddy near Bushmills on 24th May 1894. He was a member of Croaghmore Church and he received his early education at Mossside Primary School and Coleraine Academical Institution. Later he attended Magee College, Trinity College, Dublin and Assembly's College, Belfast. In 1919 he was licensed by the Route Presbytery and on 11th March 1921 he was ordained as the minister of Kingsmills.

The ordination service was well attended, the Rev. James Mulligan B.A. from First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass presiding. Unlike Mr. Torrie's ordination, there was no sit down meal for the V.I.P.'s but everyone was served tea in the Church. After speeches were made there were musical items from some members of the congregation as well as visitors. Those taking part were Miss Potts from Millvale; Miss Henry, Jerrettspass; Mrs. King, Newry; Mr. McQuitty, Mr. McNeill and Rev. S. McVicker. There were duets from Master Hunter's wife and Mrs. King and recitals from Mr. McBride and Mr. King from Newry. The choir also contributed two pieces. Rev. John Patterson from Crieve and Loughmourne

and a former member of the Church, gave a lighthearted talk and proposed a vote of thanks to everyone.

So with this introduction behind him, Mr. Kerr began his ministry among the people. The following year he married a daughter of the Rev. Hugh Abraham Irvine, the minister of Drumlee near Castlewellan and he also gained a Bachelor of Divinity Degree.

### The War Memorial Windows

One of the first projects which got underway soon after Mr. Kerr's arrival, was the erection of the war memorial. There was a great deal of debate about what form the memorial should take. Some suggested a table, some windows and one man even thought an organ should be bought in memory of those who had been killed or served in the war. The eventual decision was to erect two windows on either side of the pulpit and the contract was given to the firm of Campbell Brothers, Franklin Street, Belfast. They completed the work for a total cost of £70-13-2.

A special afternoon service was held on Sunday 28th May 1922 and the windows were unveiled. The window on the left of the pulpit has a handsome representation of the Crest of the Irish Presbyterian Church into which the motto "Ardens sed Virens" is woven and below is a panel containing the names of those who fell. The one on the right contains an artistic view of the open Bible and the panel underneath contains the names of those who served. During the service Mr. Kerr read the Roll of Honour and then Mr. Meeke, before unveiling the windows, said that he would like to say a few words. "In the first place", he said "most of the young men and women whose names have been read as having served in the Great War, and several of whom had made the supreme sacrifice, were baptised by me. A large number of them were admitted by me to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and in many cases I married their parents".

Further in his address he said that the placing of the windows in full view of the worshippers was a wise move. "These windows bestir sorrowful memories in the case of some of you", he said, "but it is good for you that you should bring your sorrows and think of them in connection with God and in connection with the worship and teaching of the House of God".

The congregation stood in silence as Mr. Meeke drew aside the curtains with which the windows had been covered and after dedicatory prayers, Rev. McConnell B.A. C.F. from Markethill gave an address. Mr. McConnell had served during the War and was wearing his khaki uniform. He spoke from Isaiah 47:8 "Remember this and shew yourselves men". He appealed at the end of the sermon for everyone to go forward playing the part of man in the service of Jesus Christ. It was a very moving service for nearly every member of the congregation at that time had relatives who were either killed or had served during the War.



WAR  
MEMORIAL  
WINDOWS

ERECTED  
1922



## COPY OF FINANCIAL REPORT FOR KINGSMILLS FOR 1922

### ANNUAL REPORT of KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

*For Year ending 31st December, 1922*

MINISTERS :                   REV. JAMES MEEKE, B.A.  
                                  REV. W. J. KEER, B.A., B.D.

#### ELDERS :

THOMAS A. ELLIOTT, D.C.	JOHN W. DILLON
WILLIAM ANDREWS	JOHN BOARDMAN
JOHN HARRISON	WILLIAM KING
D. ACHESON ELLIOTT	

#### PEW COMMITTEE :

JOHN W. DILLON	SIMPSON ELLIOTT
R. N. HARPUR	ACHESON ELLIOTT
JAMES HARRISON	

#### CEMETERY COMMITTEE :

ROBERT WATSON	H. S. PATTERSON	JAMES HARRISON
SIMPSON ELLIOTT	D. S. ELLIOTT	D. CARTMILL

#### HOUSE AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE :

SIMPSON ELLIOTT	H. S. PATTERSON	W. G. GREER
JAMES PATTERSON	W. G. PATTON	R. ELLIOTT

#### GENERAL COMMITTEE :

Members of Pew Committee.  
" Cemetery Committee.  
" House and Grounds Committee.

#### MEMBERS OF SESSION :

JOHN KING	MARTIN ANDREWS	JOHN PATTERSON
R. S. RODGERS	JAMES KING	THOS. PATTERSON
THOMAS KING	ROBERT HARRISON	THOS. McKNIGHT
J. J. KERNAGHAN	ALBERT ANDREWS	

Stipend Collector — R. N. Harpur, Divernagh House.

Sustentation Agent — Mrs. J. W. Dillon, Tullyhappy, Bessbrook.

Sec. and Treasurer Zenana Auxiliary — Miss Harpur, Divernagh House, Bessbrook.

Sec. and Treasurer Orphan Society — Mrs. Kerr, Kingsmills Manse, Whitecross.

Superintendent of Sabbath School — Acheson Elliott, Drumheriff, Whitecross.

Secretary Girls' Auxiliary — Miss Sue Scott, Creggans, Mountnorris.

Secretary I.B.R. Association — Rev. W. J. Kerr, B.A., B.D., Kingsmills Manse, Whitecross.

Treasurer — J. W. Dillon, Tullyhappy, Bessbrook.

General Secretary — W. M. Hunter, Lisadian Cottage, Whitecross.

## KINGSMILLS

## STIPEND AND SUSTENTATION LIST

Pew No.		Stipend	Sustentation	War Memorial
1—Alex McDonald	... £1 5 0	£0 6 0	£0 10 0	
Ben McDonald	... 1 5 0	0 4 0	0 10 0	
Saml. Hooke	... 2 10 0	0 12 0	—	
2—Robert S. Rogers	... 2 10 0	1 10 0	1 0 0	
3—James Scott	... 2 10 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
4—John Harrison	... 2 5 0	0 16 0	0 10 0	
5—Reps. of late W. R. Nesbitt (1/2 year)	... 2 10 0	—	—	
Mrs. J. J. Kernaghan	... 6 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	
6—Simpson Elliott	... 4 0 0	1 0 0	2 10 0	
Mrs. Stitt	... 2 0 0	0 10 0	1 0 0	
7—James Harrison	... 3 0 0	1 0 0	1 10 0	
8—John Williamson (Drumhoney)	... 2 0 0	0 14 0	1 0 0	
9—William Rogers	... 2 10 0	0 10 0	—	
10—James Patterson	... 3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
11—Thos. A. Elliott David S. Elliott	... 3 10 0	1 5 0	1 0 0	
Wm. Elliott	... 0 10 0	—	—	
12—Robert Elliott	... 3 0 0	0 16 0	1 0 0	
Wm. M. Hunter	... 1 11 0	0 12 6	1 10 0	
14—Robert Williamson	... 4 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
15—Hugh S. Andrews	... 1 8 0	0 8 0	—	
16—Robert Crozier John Williamson	... 1 0 0	0 6 0	0 10 0	
17—Ben McMurray	... 1 10 0	0 10 0	—	
18—Wm. Andrews	... 0 15 0	0 10 0	—	
21—Wm. McMullen Wm. J. Patterson	... 0 19 0	0 7 0	0 10 0	
22—Samuel Heron Jas. Johnston	... 0 9 0	0 6 0	0 10 0	
24—John Graham	... 0 10 0	0 5 0	—	
25—Simpson Dillon	... 2 0 0	0 16 0	—	
26—Mrs. George Patton Wm. G. Patton	... 1 10 0	0 10 0	1 0 0	
Alex Patton	... 0 5 0	—	0 10 0	
28—John Watson	... 1 0 0	0 12 0	0 5 0	
29—James Robb	... 1 2 0	0 6 0	—	
30—Robert Harpur	... 5 0 0	3 0 0	2 10 0	
31—David Elliott Acheson Elliott	... 2 8 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
Rev. W. J. Kerr	... 1 4 0	0 16 0	0 10 0	
Mrs. Kerr (Craigmaddy)	... —	1 10 0	2 10 0	
Paul Bequest	... 1 13 10	0 17 0	1 0 0	
Rev. James Meeke	... —	1 5 0	2 0 0	
32—John King In memory of William and John King	... 3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
33—Hugh S. Patterson John S. Patterson	... 2 15 0	1 10 0	1 0 0	
34—Reps. of late Mrs. Harpur	... 3 10 0	—	—	
Samuel Cartmill	... 2 0 0	0 16 0	—	
David Cartmill	... 1 0 0	—	1 10 0	
35—David McCullagh	... 2 0 0	1 0 0	—	
37—Miss Graham George McCullagh	... 1 0 0	0 6 0	—	
	... 0 12 0	—	—	

## KINGSMILLS

Pew No.	Stipend	Sustentation	War Memorial
38—Robert Watson	£2 10 0	£0 12 0	£1 10 0
James Watson (½ year)	0 15 0	0 9 6	0 4 0
39—Mrs. Samuel King	1 15 0	0 16 0	—
Wm. King	0 10 0	—	1 0 0
Joseph King	0 10 0	—	—
40—John W. Dillon	5 0 0	2 10 0	2 10 0
41—Mrs. J. J. Andrews	—	0 2 6	0 10 0
42—J. J. Kernaghan	1 5 0	—	—
43—Chas. Kernaghan	1 5 0	0 8 0	—
44—Thos. King	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 10 0
Wm. G. Greer	3 0 0	0 14 9	1 0 0
45—John Boardman	3 0 0	1 4 0	2 0 0
48—Wm. and Alex. Sinclair	2 0 0	0 14 0	—
James Sinclair	0 18 0	0 6 0	0 5 0
47—John Patton	0 15 0	—	0 3 0
48—Thomas Wallace	0 12 6	0 7 6	—
Alex Ross	1 0 0	0 5 0	—
49—John Patterson (Mill)	0 12 6	0 4 0	0 10 0
50—James M. McComb	0 15 0	0 8 0	—
51—James Wallace	1 5 0	—	—
52—Wm. Rantin	0 15 0	0 4 0	0 10 0
Mrs. Stevenson	0 10 0	0 12 0	—
Eliza J. Graham	0 10 0	—	0 10 0
53—James Freeburne	0 14 0	0 6 0	—
55—Samuel Rantin	0 5 0	—	—
56—Mrs. Whitten	1 0 0	0 8 0	—
Wm. Donaldson	1 4 0	0 10 0	0 10 0
57—William Patton	0 19 0	—	0 10 0
58—John H. Edgar	0 14 0	0 16 0	0 10 0
59—Mrs. John Adams	0 6 0	0 6 0	—
60—Mrs. Wm. McKnight	0 12 0	0 4 0	0 10 0
61—Mrs. Jas. McKnight	—	—	—
62—Charles Barron	0 10 0	0 4 0	—
Thomas Barron	0 5 0	—	—
Mrs. Irvine Barron	1 9 0	0 12 0	—
John Kernaghan	1 5 0	0 8 0	—
63—Samuel McComb	1 5 0	0 6 0	0 10 0
64—William Crozier	1 5 0	0 5 0	0 10 0
65—Robert J. Moffatt	0 12 0	0 8 0	—
66—Robert Wallace	0 14 0	0 6 0	—
67—Mrs. Jas. McDonald	1 0 0	0 8 0	—
George McDonald	0 8 0	0 4 0	—
68—Mrs. John Patterson (Outlacken)	1 0 0	0 6 0	—
69—Hugh Patterson	—	0 6 0	0 2 6
70—Wm. Freeburne	0 12 0	0 8 0	—
John Freeburne	0 12 0	0 8 0	—
Samuel Williamson	0 10 0	—	—
Wm. McKnight (Belleek)	—	—	—
Samuel Adams	0 6 0	0 2 0	—
War Memorial Service	—	—	9 3 8
James McComb (Belleek)	—	0 4 0	0 5 0
William Ross	0 10 0	0 8 0	—
Wm. McCullagh	—	—	—
James McCullagh	0 7 6	—	—
Miss Cartmill	0 15 0	—	—
Thos. J. Watson	0 5 0	0 2 0	—
Sam Patton	0 5 0	—	—
Thomas J. Patterson	0 14 0	£0 6 0	1 0 0

KINGSMILLS

Pew No.	Stipend	Sustentation	War Memorial
Willie Watson	£0 5 0	£0 2 0	—
Walter Patterson	—	0 8 0	—
Miss Harpur	1 15 0	0 10 0	—
Alex Patterson	0 14 0	0 6 0	—
Hugh McAldin	0 10 0	0 5 0	1 0 0
Mrs. McAldin	—	—	1 0 0
In memory of Son, Robert	0 10 0	—	—
Samuel Cole	—	0 4 0	—
Mrs. Barber	—	0 4 0	1 0 0
Graham Bequest	—	2 0 0	—
John Geddes	—	0 2 6	—
Miss Harpur (Divernagh House)	—	—	1 0 0
Mrs. Irwin (Divernagh House)	—	—	0 10 0
Alex Elliott	—	—	0 10 0
Annie Crozier	—	—	0 10 0
Annie M. Crozier	—	—	0 10 0
John Harrison, Junr.	—	—	0 10 0
James King	—	—	0 10 0
John Barron	—	—	0 10 0
Sarah Barron	—	—	0 10 0
Miss Jeanie Patterson	—	—	1 0 0
Martin, Andrews	—	—	0 10 0
	£150 9 4	£59 8 3	£70 13 2

Dr.	FINANCIAL STATEMENT	Cr.	
Stipend	£150 9 4	Balance paid Bank	£28 14 5
Sustentation	59 18 3	Stipend	150 9 4
Missions	30 7 4	Sustentation	60 0 0
Sabbath Collections	42 13 8½	Missions	30 7 4
Orphan Fund	10 14 0	Orphan Fund	10 14 0
Zenana Auxiliary	7 11 0	Zenana Auxiliary	7 11 0
War Memorial	70 13 2	Psalmody	10 0 0
Net Proceeds of Sale of Work	509 17 0	Sexton	6 5 0
Graham Bequest	1 8 0	Communion Expenses	1 1 0
		Assembly Expenses	1 10 0
		Presbytery Fees	2 11 0
		Financial Reports	3 3 2
		S.S. Fete	4 14 8
		Insurance	1 8 0
		S.S. Prizes	4 13 4
		Affiliation Fees	0 12 6
		Work at Manse	41 10 4½
		Work at Church	6 5 4
		War Memorial and Work	70 13 2
		Manse Pump	3 6 0
		Fuel	5 17 3
		Jas. Bell for Specification	1 7 9
		New Furnace	30 5 0
		Graham Bequest	1 8 0
		Balance in Bank	398 14 2
	£883 1 9½	£883 1 9½	

WM. M. HUNTER

## **PUBLIC NOTICES**

### **BAZAAR AND SALE OF WORK**

In connection with  
**KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Will be held at KINGSMILLS,  
On WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY,  
June 21st and 22nd

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Opening Ceremony by  
**MRS. W. STRANAHAN**, Newcastle,  
On Wednesday, at 2.30

---

**Chairman — Right Rev. Dr. Strahan,**  
**Moderator of the General Assembly**

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Attractions will include Aerial Flight,  
Houp-La, Bran Tub, Shooting Gallery.  
Half-hour Concerts, etc.

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**ADMISSION**

**8d.**

*Advertisement which appeared in Newry Reporter,  
Thursday June 15 1922.*

## Bazaar and Sale or Work — 21st June 1922

Less than a month after the service for the unveiling of the War Memorial Windows, another big function was being held. This time it was a bazaar and sale of work, plans for which had been going on during the previous twelve months. The purpose of the event was to raise money to repair the Church. It was fifty years since major repairs had been carried out and the committee were keen to improve the Church building.

The event was declared open by Mrs. W. Stanahan, from Castlewellan at 3 p.m. on a sunny mid-summer Wednesday afternoon. She was a daughter of the late Robert Harpur J.P., Divernagh House. The Moderator, Dr. Strahan was also there as well as seven other clerics.

The proceedings opened with the singing of the one hundredth Psalm and then a prayer by the Rev. Mulligan from Jerrettspass. The Moderator spoke, making reference first of all to an event which had taken place less than a week earlier and which had horrified the whole district around. Two days before he had attended the funerals of six Presbyterians murdered at Altnaveigh, just six miles away. These people had been taken from their beds and shot in cold blood in the presence of their families. All died immediately except one boy who passed away the next day in hospital. Land mines had been laid on several roads to obstruct police patrols and the murderers escaped. The whole community was shocked. Dr. Strahan spoke words that day which unfortunately are still heard all over our land sixty years later. He denounced murder from whatever side it came, whether the victim was a Roman Catholic or a Protestant. He then went on to speak about Kingsmills itself and how it had progressed over the years.

Following this Mrs. Stanahan spoke and declared the sale open. She received a bouquet of flowers from two little girls — Etta Rogers and Bessie Hunter. There were six work stalls laden with all sorts of produce and bric-a-brac — the farm produce stall, the sweet stall, the refreshment stall, the cake stall, the work stall and the variety stall. Then there were amusements — a shooting gallery, nail driving, houp-la, bean bags, rings and bagatelle. Two half hour concerts were held during the evening with specially invited singers taking part.

A large number of people from the congregation were involved in some way or other. The younger people helped on the stalls, especially with the amusements and the older men acted as stewards.

When the day was over and the money counted the sum of £500 had been raised. It was placed in the bank and the committee put their heads together to discuss the renovations.

## Repairs to Church 1923

After much debate it was decided to renovate the whole church but the first tenders received early in 1923 seemed very high (approx £385). So it was decided to work only on the interior of the Church. Then more tenders came in and they were lower so a final decision was made to go ahead with the original idea of renovating both inside and outside.

Mr. S. W. Reside A.M.I.C.E., Newry, supervised the work. The exterior of the Church, previously whitewashed was chipped and plastered, the work being done by Campbell and Farr. Blackwoods did the carpentry and Websters the painting. These were all Armagh firms. The pulpit was lowered in 1½ hours by taking away one step. The interior of the church was also chipped and plastered and all the surfaces were painted. The work began in the Spring of 1923 and was finished later in the year.

## The Re-opening Services

After meeting in the Session House for a number of months the church was re-opened in September. Two special services were held — morning and evening. Rev. John Gailey B.A. from Belfast conducted them both. There was a large choir which had been trained by Master Hunter and the organist was Miss S. Scott. A huge congregation gathered for both services.

## A 'B' Special Service

In September 1924 the 'B' Special Constabulary Platoon which met and trained in Lisadian were keen to hold a service in the Church. So a deputation appeared at a Session meeting to ask permission to have an afternoon service in Kingsmills. After considerable discussion, they were allowed to go ahead so long as they did not bring a band inside the Church!

## Mr. Kerr's Health

The Kerrs worked hard and were very popular with the congregation. Mrs. Kerr was responsible for the formation of a Girls Auxiliary soon after coming to Kingsmills. There is an account of a very successful sports day held by this organisation in June 1924. Mr. Kerr opened it and his wife spoke about the work carried on by the branch. There were games and various side shows and the evening ended with tea.

While living in the manse one child was born to the Kerrs, a son, Daniel Hugh. He was born in 1923 and was baptised by his grandfather, Rev. Hugh A. Irvine. Mr. Kerr's health was not good towards the end of the summer of 1924 and he was away from the Church for some months. However, after convalescence at his home in Co. Antrim he was able to return and resume the work.

In 1926, he received a call to Donegall Pass congregation in Belfast and he was installed there on 11th January 1927. A daughter, Hannah (now Mrs. Dickson) was born soon after they moved. They were only two years in Belfast when Mr. Kerr took pneumonia. He died on 29th January 1929.

Rev. Rex Rutherford, a retired Presbyterian minister, writing about Mr. Kerr's time in Belfast says : "I was a school boy in my most impressionable and formative years. Mr. Kerr prepared me and my wife, as she later became, for our first Communion and his instruction and example are still amongst the most decisive and inspiring influences in our lives."

On her husband's death, Mrs. Kerr went to live in Ballycastle. Their son Daniel is now living in Canada and Hannah has just recently retired from Ballycastle High School, where she was Senior Mistress.

### **Proposed Amalgamation**

Following Mr. Kerr's departure, the Rev. Mulligan from Jerrettspass was made convener. There was talk of amalgamation with Mountnorris but this would not have been a popular decision. A congregational meeting was held in March 1927 and the following resolution was unanimously adopted and sent to the Union Committee :-

"That the congregation of Kingsmills refuse under any circumstances to consent to amalgamation with Mountnorris or any other Church and they call upon the Union Committee to authorise the making of a list of candidates with a view to filling the vacancy. That in the event of a refusal by the Union Committee to do so, the Committee be not recognised and steps taken to supply the pulpit".

This did not prove necessary. The Church was given leave to call a minister and within nine months the congregation were ready for another installation service.

### **Rev. James Graham B.A. -- (1927 - 1949)**

Mr. Graham was installed on the 12th October 1927. Unlike all the previous ministers of the Church, for whom Kingsmills was their first charge, he was a very experienced man, having been in the ministry for twenty years. James Graham was born at Ballyworphy near Hillsborough on the 24th April 1880 and he was brought up in the congregation of Annahilt. He studied at Queen's University and gained a B.A. degree in 1904. After attending Assembly's College, he was licensed by the Dromore Presbytery on the 6th June 1907. A year and a half later he was called to the congregation of Corvalley in Co. Monaghan where he worked hard to keep the scattered Presbyterian community together. He was responsible for the formation of a Presbyterian Church in the town of

Carrickmacross. In 1921 a building was bought from another denomination and it was opened free of debt after having been reconstructed at a cost of £1,800. For over fourteen of the nineteen years in which he was in Co. Monaghan Mr. Graham was Clerk of Bailieborough Presbytery.



So he arrived at Kingsmills, a man well in his forties with plenty of experience of life in a country church.

He had married a Miss Frances Hunter from Magherafelt in 1918 and they had no family. The Manse had been put into good order for their arrival and together they settled into their first winter in Kingsmills.

Mr. Graham stocked the Manse farm with sheep and was often to be seen at the markets in either Camlough or Newry buying or selling the livestock. He had a great interest in all types of farming and no doubt this was an asset when visiting among the congregation.

Mrs. Graham had a keen interest in music and she played the organ in Church for some years. However, her health was not good and after a spell in hospital she died in September 1937. Her sister, Miss Hunter came to keep house at the Manse and she continued to look after Mr. Graham until his death.

#### Mr. Graham's Ministry

Although Mr. Graham was in Kingsmills for over twenty years there is, unfortunately, little known about his work. The Committee Minute Books which cover most of his ministry are missing and the Session Book contains little relevant information. We do know, however, that Mr. Graham was a very decisive man, often making decisions without consulting the members of Session or Committee. In 1929 the Church Secretary resigned and joined a neighbouring Presbyterian Church because he wasn't happy that the elected representatives were being kept in the picture. Despite

this things must have ran fairly smoothly as the report of the visitation of Presbytery in 1933 would indicate. It was carried out just before Mr. Meeke's death and the findings were as follows :-

"Finding of the Presbytery of Newry at their visitation of the congregation of Kingsmills held on 4th July, 1933 :-

In their visitation of the congregation of Kingsmills the Presbytery of Newry express their great pleasure that the senior minister of the congregation, Rev. James Meeke, continues in extreme old age to enjoy good health and to take a keen interest in the progress of religion. They are proud to have on their roll one held in such deserved honours. The Presbytery are much gratified to find that the minister in active duty, Rev. James Graham, is exercising a very faithful and fruitful ministry, enjoying the confidence of the people, and giving due attention to the various sides of his work, and that the congregation on their part manifest an admirable degree of zeal and devotion. They are pleased to find that the attendance at public worship is in reasonable proportion to the size of the congregation, and that much skill and care are devoted to the worthy rendering of the service of praise. This congregation like others has declined in size through rural depopulation, the inevitable decline in the number attending the Sabbath School being especially regrettable, but there is no indication of any decline from the spiritual standard which has prevailed here in the past.

Turning to the temporal affairs of the congregation, the Presbytery note the excellent condition in which the church property is kept. The recent internal decoration of the church greatly enhances its beauty. They would urge the members as soon as conditions in the farming would improve even a little to make a determined effort to raise the congregational contributions to stipend to £120, and thus release for other necessary purposes the sum at present devoted to stipend from the sabbath collections. Since last visitation the funds of the congregation have benefited by the receipt of the late Mr. Boardman's substantial legacy. A list should be prepared of the various old registers and legal documents belonging to the congregation and a copy of the list be supplied to the Presbytery. The legal congregational documents should be lodged for safe keeping either in the Strong Room, Church House, or the local Bank. The Presbytery consider the church property so valuable that they recommend an increase in the insurance.

In conclusion the Presbytery commend office-bearers and people to the continued care of the God of all grace and to the guidance of the Spirit of his Son and they appoint Rev. G. B. Shaw to read this finding on a convenient sabbath and address the people upon it.

Certified by

Hugh McIlroy, Clerk of Presbytery

2nd August, 1933."

### John Boardman

Reference is made to the substantial legacy from the late Mr. Boardman's estate. John Boardman was a son of John and Mary Boardman from Cremore. Around the turn of this century he bought land in Cavanakill and began to worship in Kingsmills Church. He served as an elder for a number of years and sang in the choir. On his death in 1926 he left the Church £146-15-0 which in those days was a large sum of money. It was invested in War Stock and the Church has benefited from this since. Mr. Boardman is buried in Cremore graveyard.

### Unveiling of Memorial Tablet to the late Rev. James Meeke

On Sunday 6th March 1937, a service was held in the Church to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the rebuilding of the Church. It seemed fitting that this service should be combined with the unveiling of a memorial tablet in memory of the late Mr. Meeke. After all he had been the minister for almost seventy of those one hundred years.

The service was conducted by the Rt. Rev. Dr. F. S. W. O'Neill, Moderator of the General Assembly. He had gone to school with Mr. Meeke's sons. The black and white marble tablet, situated on the left of the pulpit was unveiled by Mr. Meeke's only surviving daughter, Isobel. It is inscribed :-

"In memory of Rev. James Meeke B.A., the faithful and beloved minister of this Church. Ordained 21st December 1864. Passed into rest 18th July 1933".

Underneath in small print are the words -- "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me". It is surmounted by the Church's emblem the Burning Bush with the motto, "Ardens Sed Virens".

Mr. Graham then gave an outline of the history of Kingsmills and he went on to speak of the qualities of Mr. Meeke. "Such a



long ministry", he said, "should be remembered and so that we may remember, this marble tablet stands in the Church he loved".

### Retirement of Mr. Graham

In February 1949, after twenty one years as pastor of the Church, Mr. Graham tendered his resignation at a meeting of the Newry Presbytery. He was now almost seventy years of age and he felt that it was time to give way to someone with more energy. He spoke affectionately about the Kingsmills people and he paid tribute to their financial generosity. Messrs. Acheson Elliott, William King, Joseph Patton and Thomas King all voiced their appreciation of Mr. Graham's ministry.

Mr. Graham left Kingsmills with many memories. He had been here during the depressed years of the 1930's and he had seen the people through the hardships of a Second World War. He had also seen a gradual decline in the number of families connected with the Church. When he came there were over ninety families and by 1945 there were only seventy. Sunday School numbers were obviously smaller too with only around four teachers required to instruct the young people. There were no youth organisations and the Bible Class was not operating. Kingsmills Public Elementary School was no longer under the influence of the Church but had been handed over to the County Armagh Regional Educational Committee.

So Mr. Graham retired with his sister-in-law to Bangor but as the Senior Minister of the Church he returned from time to time to take part in the services. He died on the 26th February 1960. His funeral was held on a Sunday afternoon, the body being brought back to Kingsmills for burial. A large number of the congregation gathered at the Church for the final farewell. The Rev. T. H. Witherow from Markethill and the Rev. D. H. Thompson officiated. The Graham burial plot is right beside the Meeke plot at the front of the Church.



## Rev. Ronald W. Adams B.A. A.T.C.L. — (1949 - 1958)



Three months after Mr. Graham's resignation, the seventh minister of the Church was ordained. He was Mr. Ronald William Adams, a native of Belfast, who had been brought up in the Duncairn area. After a distinguished scholastic career he gained an Arts degree and a diploma in music. The ordination service was held in the Church on the 15th June 1949 with the Rev. J. McCaughan B.A., Moderator of the Newry Presbytery presiding.

### The Young People's Guild

During Mr. Graham's ministry little effort had been made to cater for the young people of the congregation. So one of the first things Mr. Adams did was to organise a "Young People's Guild". The inaugural meeting was held in the Session Room on the 12th October 1950. Mr. Adams was in the chair and the following office bearers were elected :-

President — Rev. Adams

Vice President — Miss Doreen Harrison

Secretary — Mr. William Doran

Treasurer — Miss Hariett McCullough

A programme was organised and meetings were to be held fortnightly. The enthusiasm was so great, however, that they soon decided to meet weekly. Talks and visits were arranged and most evenings ended with a game of table tennis. There were also social evenings when other young people's groups from the neighbourhood were invited along.

The enthusiasm did not last very long and by the year 1953/54 numbers attending were very small indeed. At the final meeting of that session, Mr. Adams concluded a series of talks he had been giving on John Calvin, stating that the following year he hoped to give a similar series of lectures on John Knox. However the Guild never reopened and the young people of the Church were once

again without any organised meeting. This remained the case until the formation of the Youth Fellowship twenty years later.

Two and a half years after coming to the area, Mr. Adams married Miss Doreen Elliott from Drumherriff, a daughter of Mr. Acheson Elliott, the ruling elder of the congregation. They were married in Kingsmills by the Rev. James Graham.

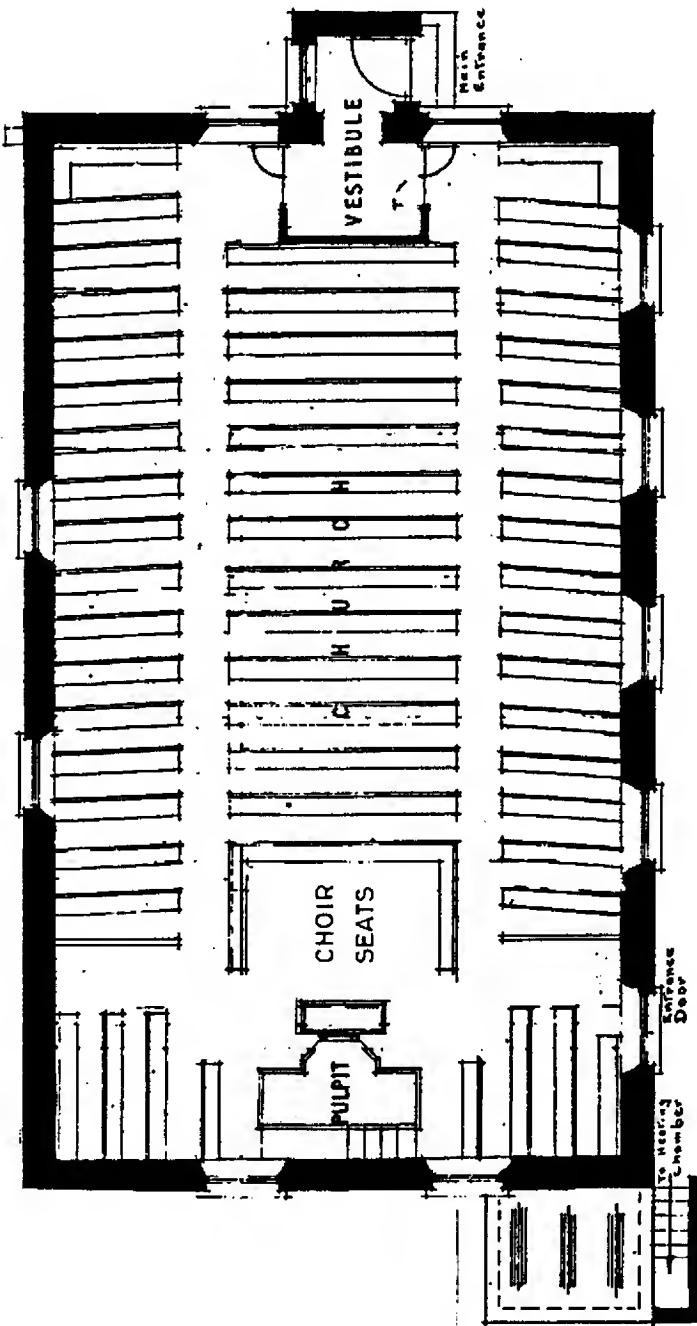
#### Interior Alterations and Decorations 1952 - 1954

It was thirty years since any major work had been carried out on or in the Church so in the early 1950's moves were made to make some improvements. In June 1952 a communion table and chair the gifts of Mrs. Simpson Elliott, in memory of her husband, were dedicated by the Rev. Graham. An individual communion service in memory of Mr. Samuel Hooke, Creggans, was also presented. Following suggestions by the Architectural Committee in Church House it was decided to do some alterations. They thought that the Church was too big for the people and that part of it could be converted into one or two rooms for the use of the minister and for smaller meetings. Several suggestions from various quarters were made in regard to the new layout. One idea was that a platform be erected the whole way across the front of the Church and the pews at the side and the front of the pulpit were to be removed. The choir was to sit at one end of the north wall and with the old pulpit removed a new smaller one could be placed in the other corner.

Many people in the congregation were against an alteration of any kind. Two very heated congregational meetings were held in the Autumn of 1953 and it was finally decided to extend the dais at the front to the full width of the Church, remove eleven pews which would be in the way and place the choir at one end of the dais. Major G. W. Reside was the architect and the work was carried out by Marshall Wilson from Newry. The entire Church was repainted by A. Hanna. Reopening services were held on the 5th September 1954. In the morning the special preacher was the Rev. W. W. Clarke M.A. Dundalk and Principal J. E. Davey M.A., D.D., Belfast spoke at the evening service. He later dedicated the following gifts — the Pulpit Fall, Baptismal Font, Lectern, Praise Board, Choir chairs, collection baskets, carpets and Pulpit cushions. They were all gifts of Mr. W. J. Robb, St. Pauls, Minnesota, U.S.A.

William James Robb was born in 1876, the son of James and Eliza Robb from Drumhoney. He was brought up in the Church but as a young man he emigrated to America. In 1953 he sent 1,000 dollars to Kingsmills to be used to "beautify" the building. An organ costing over £350 was bought and the remainder of the money was used to purchase the other items of furnishing. On the same day as these were dedicated the Youth Guild presented another praise board to the Church. When all of these were in place the interior of the building looked fine and a credit to all concerned.

AYOUT OF THE CHURCH PRIOR TO 1954



# ANNUAL REPORT OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1956

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### Ministers :

Rev. JAMES GRAHAM, B.A.  
Rev. RONALD ADAMS, B.A., A.T.C.L.

**Elders** — W. King, Acheson Elliott (Clerk)

**Committee** — R. N. Harpur, R. Doran, T. King, R. F. Harrison, M. Baird, K. Elliott, H. Ross, James Flanagan, W. Edgar, John King (Lurgana), James King, Thomas McCormack, Wm. Watson, D. McCullagh, James Freeburne

**Church Officer** — Danny Wallace, Rathcarbery

**Stipend Collector** — Thomas King, Mountnorris

**Treasurer, Zenana Mission** — Miss Ethel McCullagh

**Agent "Woman's Work"** — Miss Mary King

**Treasurer, Orphan Society** — Rev. R. W. Adams

**Secretary, I.B.R.A.** — Rev. R. W. Adams

**Superintendent S.S.** — Acheson Elliott

**Congregational Treasurer** — Acheson Elliott

**F.W.O. Treasurer** — Kinnier Elliott

**General Secretary** — Marshall Baird

**Agent "Presbyterian Heralds"** — Mrs. Adams

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Name		Stipend			Sustentation		
		£	s	d	£	s	d
R. N. Harpur	...	6	0	0	3	0	0
W. R. Elliott	...	4	0	0	1	5	0
W. G. Greer	...	4	0	0	1	0	0
T. J. Patterson (decd.) $\frac{1}{2}$ year	...	1	0	0	—		
In memory of Joseph Patterson $\frac{1}{2}$ year	...	1	0	0	—		
Mr. and Mrs. T. McCormack	...	3	10	0	—		
Mrs. Jas. Freeburn	...	1	0	0	0	10	0
Mrs. Qua	...	1	10	0	0	10	0
John Rodgers	...	3	0	0	—		
Miss M. Rodgers	...	1	0	0	—		
R. F. Harrison	...	4	0	0	1	0	0
Jas. McMullan	...	2	0	0	—		
John King	...	1	0	0	—		
Mrs. M. A. Harrison	...	1	10	0	—		
In Memory of Simpson Dillon	...	4	0	0	—		
Miss Sally Dillon	...	2	0	0	1	0	0
Norman Andrews	...	3	0	0	—		
Mrs. M. S. Graham	...	3	0	0	1	0	0
Mrs. A. Ross	...	1	10	0	—		

## KINGSMILLS

Name	Stipend	Sustentation		
		£	s d	£
R. J. Rodgers	1 10 0			—
W. G. Rodgers	1 10 0			—
W. G. Ross	1 5 0			—
Thomas Ross	1 5 0			—
Mrs. S. J. Dougan	2 0 0			—
Thos. McKnight	2 0 0			—
W. Freeburn	1 0 0	0	8 0	0 8 0
Herbert Cartmill	1 10 0			—
Thomas King	6 0 0			—
S. H. Cartmill	1 10 0			—
Joseph Watson	1 0 0			—
Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Elliott	1 0 0			—
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Elliott	1 0 0			—
S. J. Hamilton	0 10 0			—
Robert Doran	3 10 0			—
Mrs. Elizabeth Doran	3 10 0			—
Miss S. J. Patterson (Killowen)	1 0 0			—
Hugh Baird	2 0 0	0	10 0	0 10 0
Samuel Andrews	1 0 0			—
		£82	0 0	£10 3 0

SUMMARY OF FREEWILL OFFERINGS FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1956

No.	Name	F.W.O.
		£ s d
1	Mrs. J. J. Kernaghan	6 12 6
2	In Memory of Simpson Elliott	7 0 0
3	Miss Harriet McCullough	1 6 6
4	Mrs. R. F. Harrison	1 17 0
5	D. A. Elliott	4 0 0
6	Jas. Patterson	6 10 0
7	Mrs. Jas. McMullan	1 6 3
8	Miss E. Watson	2 10 0
9	D. Crozier	2 2 0
10	Miss R. King	3 18 10
11	Mrs. D. McCullough	3 3 0
12	Miss M. Patterson	2 0 3
13	Jas Watson (Carrickananny)	2 13 0
14	Wm. King (Carrowmannon)	4 10 0
15	Joe King	1 11 6
16	Yvonne Andrews	1 4 0
17	Jas. King	2 13 0
18	Mrs. Jas. King	2 13 0
19	H. S. Baird	1 6 6
20	John Lockhart	1 0 0
21	Joe Patton	2 0 0
22	Miss M. Patton	1 0 0
23	W. Edgar	2 14 0
24	Miss A. Adams	1 10 0
25	William King (Lurgana)	1 1 6

## KINGSMILLS

No.	Name				F.W.O.
					£ s d
26	Miss Sue Barron 1955	...	...	0	10 0
	do. 1956	...	...	0	10 0
27	R. Wallace	...	...	2	15 6
28	Robert Scott (Senior)	...	...	3	3 0
29	A. Patterson	...	...	2	13 0
30	T. Barron	...	...	1	0 0
31	Miss B. Ross	...	...	1	0 0
32	J. Herron	...	...	1	0 0
33	Miss R. Elliott	...	...	2	10 0
34	S. A. Cartmill (The Hollow)	...	...	2	12 0
35	D. K. Elliott	...	...	1	0 0
38	D. Wallace	...	...	0	13 0
40	Robert Lockhart	...	...	1	2 0
41	Mrs. H. Wallace	...	...	1	0 3
42	Mrs. R. Freeburn	...	...	0	10 0
45	S. Wallace	...	...	0	13 3
46	Miss E. McCullough	...	...	1	6 6
47	Marshall Baird	...	...	1	6 6
48	W. H. Johnston	...	...	0	8 0½
49	W. Freeburn	...	...	2	13 3
51	C. Lundy	...	...	0	6 6
52	D. McCullough	...	...	2	15 9
53	W. Doran	...	...	1	8 6
54	Miss Anna Lockhart	...	...	1	3 11
55	J. McMullan (Jnr.)	...	...	0	14 9
56	Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Patton	...	...	2	14 0
57	Miss M. Dougan	...	...	1	18 6
58	Mrs. T. King	...	...	1	8 6
60	R. Freeburn	...	...	0	10 0
61	Miss B. Scott	...	...	1	12 0
62	Mr. and Mrs. T. Moffatt	...	...	2	13 0
63	W. Watson	...	...	2	15 0
64	Mr. and Mrs. J. Flanagan	...	...	2	0 0
65	W. J. McCullough	...	...	1	6 6
66	Mrs. D. Crozier	...	...	2	15 1¼
67	Mrs. R. W. Adams	...	...	3	0 0
68	Miss S. Freeburn	...	...	1	1 6
70	C. Barron, 1955	...	...	0	10 0
	do. 1956	...	...	0	10 0
72	W. Lockhart	...	...	1	6 9
73	R. Scott (Jnr.)	...	...	2	13 0
74	Mrs. D. McCullough (Jnr.)	...	...	2	14 9
75	Brian Doran	...	...	1	6 0
76	Miss S. Moffatt	...	...	1	6 6
78	Miss D. Lockhart	...	...	1	5 6
79	Mrs. Acheson Elliott	...	...	2	5 0
80	Mrs. H. Baird	...	...	1	6 0
81	Jack Paterson	...	...	1	6 6
82	Harold Patterson	...	...	2	0 9
83	Rev. R. W. Adams	...	...	4	0 0
84	Reginald King	...	...	1	1 0
85	Miss Mary King	...	...	2	9 6

## KINGSMILLS

No.	Name		F.W.O.
		£ s d	£ s d
86	W. King (Junr.), Carrowmannon	...	1 5 6
88	Miss E. Lundy	...	0 7 6
89	John King	...	1 6 0
90	Jas. Freeburn	...	1 16 0
91	Mrs. D. K. Elliott	...	1 0 0
92	Bertie Flanagan	...	1 0 0
93	Miss E. Ross	...	0 17 6
94	R. Watson	...	5 0 0
95	J. Watson (Drumcrow)	...	1 10 0
96	N. Crozier	...	2 7 0
97	M. Crozier	...	2 2 6
98	Miss Sylvia Cartmill	...	0 2 0
100	David McMullan	...	3 0 0
101	H. Ross	...	1 6 6
102	Mrs. H. Ross	...	1 6 6
103	Miss Qua	...	1 8 6
104	Mrs. S. Barbour	...	5 6 0
105	Mrs. Young	...	2 11 0
106	Sergt. Young	...	2 10 0
109	Thomas Moffat (Jnr.)	...	0 10 0
110	Robert S. Moffatt	...	0 10 0
111	Bertie Edgar	...	0 10 0
	W. L. Elliott (Jerrettspass)	...	1 0 0
	Mrs. M. Hamilton, (Outlacken)	...	1 0 0
			1 0 0
			£192 6 5

REPAIR FUND RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1956

To	£ s d	By	£ s d
Balance at Northern Bank Ltd., 31st December, 1955	248 13 8	By David Crozier—	
		Repairs to Wall	11 5 0
		Repairs to Manse	69 0 0
		" Robert Doran—Materials for Manse Repairs	39 4 10
		" Howard T. Whyte Ltd —Pump Repairs	4 12 3
		" Alex. Hanna—Painting Church. Balance of 1954 Account	20 16 6
		" Balance at Credit Northern Bank Ltd. 31st December, 1956	103 15 1
	£248 13 8		£248 13 8

Prepared from Bank Pass Book, available vouchers and information supplied by the Treasurer and certified accordingly.

20th February, 1957.  
Hill Street, Newry.

ATKINSON and BOYD,  
Chartered Accountants.

## KINGSMILLS

MUSIC RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1956

To	£	s	d	By	£	s	d
Balance at Northern Bank Ltd., 31st December, 1955	307	6	10	Music Lessons	5	5	0
				" Organist's Salary	10	0	0
				" Piano Hire—W. V. Hogg	3	10	0
				" Repairs to Organ	12	5	0
				" Organ Cover	10	0	0
				" Anthems	0	14	1
				" Expenses : Mayfair Choral Society	40	16	9
				" Printing : Concert Admission Tickets	2	10	0
				Balance at Credit Northern Bank Ltd. 31st Dec., 1956	222	6	0
	£307	6	10		£307	6	10

Prepared from Bank Pass Book, available vouchers and information supplied by the Treasurer and certified accordingly.

20th February, 1957.  
Hill Street, Newry.

ATKINSON and BOYD,  
Chartered Accountants.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1956

To	£	s	d	By	£	s	d
Balance at Northern Bank Ltd., 31st December, 1955	416	17	7	Library Books	39	8	9
" Bus Fares received— Excursion	7	6	0	" Robb Prizes	9	0	0
				" Sunday School Fee	0	15	0
				" Tea Boiler	4	5	0
				" Excursion expenses— Buses, 24th August 1956	27	1	0
				" Do. Lunches	12	15	0
				" Sunday School Christmas Party	34	8	5
				" Cheque Book	0	4	2
				" Balance at credit Northern Bank Ltd. 31st December, 1956	296	6	3
	£424	3	7		£424	3	7

Prepared from Bank Pass Book, available vouchers and information supplied by the Treasurer and certified accordingly.

20th February, 1957.  
Hill Street, Newry.

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KINGSMILLS

GENERAL CHURCH FUND RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1956

To		£	s	d	By		£	s	d
To	Stipend Received	82	0	0	By	Balance due Northern			
"	Sustentation Subs.	10	3	0		Bank Ltd., 31st			
"	Stipend Bequests	32	1	8		December, 1955	237	12	10
"	Sustentation Bequests	2	17	6	"	Stipend Arrears,			
"	Poor Fund Bequest	1	3	0		1955	46	7	2
"	Manse Upkeep				"	Stipend paid 1956	183	1	7
	Bequest	6	4	0	"	Stipend Bequests			
"	Bank Interest	10	8	0		1955	31	9	0
"	Freewill Offerings	192	6	5	"	Stipend Bequests			
"	Earl Haig Fund	3	10	0		1956	32	1	8
"	Gift Day	7	9	5	"	National Health			
"	Sabbath Collections	69	18	5		Insurance 1955	9	12	10
"	Foreign Mission				"	National Health			
	Collection	13	12	11		Insurance 1956	10	18	10
"	Sunday School				"	Central Ministry Fd.	88	0	0
	Collections	1	15	7	"	Insurance, Fire, etc.	11	14	9
"	R. A. F. Collection	2	11	6	"	Presbytery Fees	8	0	5
"	Sale of Woman's				"	Retired Ministers'			
	Work	2	16	0		Fund	7	5	10
"	Sale of Presbyterian				"	Financial Reports	8	3	5
	Heralds	3	0	0	"	Zenana Mission	5	5	6
"	Playground Rent	2	0	0	"	Sexton's Salary	22	10	0
"	Zenana Mission	5	5	6	"	Earl Haig Fund	2	0	0
"	Proceeds from				"	Manse Rents	30	0	0
	Concert	36	10	0	"	Presbyterian Heralds	3	0	0
"	Hungarian Relief				"	Woman's Work	2	16	0
	Fund	27	10	8	"	Bank Fees and Cheque			
"	Balance due Northern					Books	1	9	4
	Bank Ltd., 31st				"	Manse Rates	27	5	11
	December, 1956	381	12	3	"	Stationery and F.W.O.			
						Envelopes	5	4	1
						Foreign and Home			
						Mission Schemes	15	8	6
						Purchase £35 4½%			
						Defence Bonds	35	0	0
						Hungarian Relief			
						Fund	27	10	8
						Orange Service			
						Collection	5	17	6
						Accountancy Fees	28	15	0
						Mission Expenses	5	0	0
						Land Annuity—			
						Cottage	3	5	0
		£894	15	10			£894	15	10

Prepared from Cash Book, Bank Pass Book, available vouchers and information supplied by Treasurer and certified accordingly.

20th February, 1957.  
Hill Street, Newry.

ATKINSON and BOYD,  
Chartered Accountants.

## KINGSMILLS

MEMORANDUM COTTAGE ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1956

	£	s	d		£	s	d
To Amount due to Congregation	338	1	5	By Amount due to Congregation	333	6	5
N.B. Rent receivable in respect of Cottage for year ended 31st Jan., 1957, amounting to £36 was lodged with the Northern Bank Ltd., on 7th February, 1957.				" Insurance 1956	1	10	0
				" Land Annuity 1956	3	5	0
	<hr/> £338	<hr/> 1	<hr/> 5		<hr/> £338	<hr/> 1	<hr/> 5

Prepared from information supplied by the Treasurer and certified  
accordingly.

20th February, 1957.

Hill Street, Newry.

ATKINSON and BOYD,  
Chartered Accountants.

## The Setting Up Of A Commission

On the face of it, all seemed to be going well but this was not the case. We are told in "The History of the Presbyterian Churches" that during the 1950's "all was not harmonious in Kingsmills" and sadly this brief statement, though showing admirable reserve, is nevertheless accurate!

All was not well — certain complaints and charges were brought against the minister — Mr. Adams, the Kirk Session and Committee and the Newry Presbytery. The allegations concerned misconduct in fulfilling certain duties incumbent upon minister, session, etc and subsequent failure by those responsible to remedy the situation. It was deemed advisable in view of the "serious discontent" within the congregation to appoint a special commission of the General Assembly to deal with the matter. When investigation was duly made through the proper channels some of the alleged charges were dismissed for lack of evidence but others were sustained. The Commissioners findings were published on the 1st March 1956, and, with a view to healing the breaches in the congregation the Commission also gave direction and advice.

The situation was not, however, to be resolved as easily or as speedily as anticipated. For a time things seemed to be settling down. The Commission continued its oversight throughout 1956 and 1957 and some progress was made. But in 1958 the embers of discontent again flared up and the Newry Presbytery felt they must call once again upon the services of the Commission.

The result of this further inquiry was the recognition that, in the best interests of all concerned, Mr. Adams should be loosed from his charge. Thus on the 31st January 1958 Kingsmills was once more a vacant congregation under the care of the Newry Presbytery, Mr. Adams subsequently becoming Stated Supply in Leitrim congregation, Co. Down.

## CHAPTER 13

# THE LAST THIRTY YEARS

Rev. D. H. Thompson (1958 - 1965)

By July 1958 it was felt that it was time to have a permanent Minister once again and Church House asked Mr. Thompson if he would be willing to come to the Congregation as their Minister in charge. He agreed to do so and commenced his work on 1st September that year.

The Commission continued to watch over the Church and in 1959 they reported that "the life and activities of Kingsmills are very cheering. The earlier trouble seems to have settled down, attendances are improving and a peaceful spirit prevails". In 1961 the Commission was finally discharged when they were satisfied that normality had returned.



Mr. Thompson's Ministry

He was born in the Stranmillis district of Belfast and after studying for the Ministry he was ordained as an accredited Minister of a Church in England. He served the Lord for a number of years on the Mission field in South America doing pioneering work among the wild Indian tribes of Paraguay. This was difficult work and there was much hardship to endure but Mr. Thompson never doubted God's presence with him. He had the joy of seeing many of these Indians trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ and building

their own Churches in which to worship. The work he began still continues to this day.

On returning to his homeland due to health reasons, Mr. Thompson served the Church in Co. Monaghan, looking after three small charges there — Corlea, Loughmourne and Crieve. This involved quite a bit of travel among this isolated Presbyterian community.

When Mr. Thompson and his wife came North to Kingsmills in 1958 they faced a different type of problem — trying to knit together a very fragmented body of people both spiritually and socially. Numbers attending Church had dropped considerably. On a 'good' Sunday there might have been a Congregation of thirty people. There were less than twenty children attending Sunday School. So visiting and encouraging the people was of prime importance. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson spent a great deal of time going round the district and getting to know the people. He talked much of his days in Paraguay and taught the children the chorus of "Jesus loves me" in Paraguayan. On the Sabbath day, Mr. Thompson faithfully preached God's word from the pulpit. In his sermons he often referred to having served Almighty God for over forty years, never regretting a moment of that time. His wife was honorary organist until February 1963.

#### Installation of Electricity

In 1961 the Commission met to discuss the Church property and it was agreed to hold a congregational meeting on the 23rd February with Rev. Witherow, Markethill presiding. The main discussion of the evening centred around the installation of an electric lighting system in the Church.

A new boiler was also to be installed and the Committee were given leave to remove trees in the Churchyard.

The electricity was not installed until 1963. Mr. G. Gibson was given the contract and the total amount paid for the work was £203.00 — £140.00 for the Church and £63.00 for the Manse. All the old oil lamps were removed except for the two in the pulpit which were converted to electric.

During Mr. Thompson's time in Kingsmills the Congregation had the opportunity to vote for new elders and a new Committee. The elders were ordained on 9th December 1962 (See page 201). The new Committee elected in 1963 comprised Noel Crozier, Robert Doran, James Flanagan, James Freeburn, Roy Harpur, John King, William King (Lurgana), William King (Carrowmannon), Thomas King, Winston McCormick, David McMullan, Jim McMullan and Harold Patterson.

By the beginning of 1965, due to indifferent health, Mr. Thompson decided to retire. He preached his farewell sermon on the 28th March that year taking his text from Deuteronomy 30 : 19

"I call upon heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing : therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live".

The Congregation very much regretted losing Mr. and Mrs. Thompson after a brief six and a half years but with hindsight their stabilising influence was immeasurable. When they left, the Church had been built up both spiritually and numerically. The numbers in the Sunday School had reached forty — an increase of twenty five children and for the first time since 1922 there had been a new election of elders.

Mr. Thompson and his wife went to live in Lisburn. Since then his health has caused concern from time to time, having been in and out of hospital on many occasions. Now in his eighty-seventh year, he is unable to do very much but he spends a lot of his time on translation work. He still keeps in touch with some members of the Congregation.

#### VIEWS OF THE CHURCH IN THE 1960's



*This shows the front of the Church surrounded by shrubs and trees and the Church Notice Board which is no longer in use.*



*1966 after electricity was installed.*

## Rev. Dr. Robert Topping M.A. (1965 - 1977)

Following Mr. Thompson's retirement the Union Commission met and decided that Kingsmills could no longer support a Minister on their own. So Rev. Robert Topping, the Minister of 1st Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass became Stated Supply.

He had a good knowledge of the Congregation already, having been a member of the enlarged Session set up in 1956.

Dr. Topping was brought up in Belfast and was a member of Townsend Street Presbyterian Church. He studied at Queens University where he obtained an M.A. Degree and Assembly's College.

He was licensed by the Belfast Presbytery in 1938 and was for two years assistant to Rev. Robert Davey, D.D. Dunmurry. In July 1941 he was ordained in 1st Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass. Dr. Davey speaking at the ordination, said that this Congregation was very fortunate in getting a man like Mr. Topping. He paid a glowing tribute to his scholarly abilities and to the work he had carried out during his two years in Dunmurry. Dr. Davey regarded Mr. Topping as one of their best students in those years.

The new Minister speaking during the service said — "I am firmly persuaded that today we need the Gospel of Christ more than ever. The two alternatives facing the world today are Christ or chaos. The world had got to face the difference between those two things today and requires now, more than at any other time, to recover its sense of the dignity of the world and the value of the human soul. That was the teaching of Jesus Christ and it was exemplified in His life. It was because they would not listen to his message that the world today was being torn asunder through the bloodshed of misery and war".



*Rev. Dr. Robert Topping M.A. and Mrs. Topping*

Mr. Topping married Miss Mary Holloway, also a native of Belfast. They had a son, John, born in 1945. Mrs. Topping was a tremendous help to her husband over the years. She took a lively interest in the work, not only of the Church, but of the whole community.

Dr. Topping was a highly intelligent man and although residing in Jerretspass he contributed much to the Presbyterian Church at large.

He was examiner for the Board of Studies in Systematic Theology and he was also General Assembly Convener for Social Services from 1956 - 68. As a member of Committee on National and International problems he made important contributions to the documents prepared by them on vital social issues and over the years he has contributed theological articles to various journals. He only missed the Moderatorship of the Presbyterian Church by one vote.

On the local front he was Chaplain of the Newry Hospital for a number of years. During his ministry in Kingsmills both he and Mrs. Topping endeared themselves to the people with their faithful visiting and genuine concern for the needs of individuals.

Dr. Topping spent twelve years in Kingsmills and in that time the Church building and grounds underwent much improvement. Below is a list of the work carried out and its cost.

Year	Work Carried Out	Cost		
		£	s.	d.
1966	Mr. S. Geddis reroofed the Church	386	13	11
1967	Mains water connected	5	5	0
1967	Church floor repaired	67	10	0
1967	Mr. J. Douglas refitted toilets	86	12	11
1968	Concreting of paths	170	0	0
1968	Carpeting the aisles and front of Church	129	0	0
1969	New Heating System installed	575	0	0
1970	Lawnmower bought	48	15	0
		£		p
1971	Rentokil treatment to wood	289.04		
1974	Remapping Graveyard	243.37		
1974	Graveyard renovations	171.61		

At the same time as all this work was progressing there was a great deal of wrangling going on with regard to the Cottage property.

In 1970 a Visitation of Presbytery was held. Questions were put to the representatives of the Kirk Session, Messrs. T. McCormick

and W. Watson and the Congregational Committee, Messrs. W. King, Carrowmannon and W. King, Lurgana.

The finding is recorded below.

**Kingsmills Visitation 24/6/70**

**FINDING**

On their visitation of the Congregation of Kingsmills, the Presbytery of Newry are gratified to find that the Congregation, which is at the moment a Stated Supply, is being faithfully served by the Rev. Robert Topping, M.A.; that he is exercising a fruitful ministry and enjoys the confidence of the people. Mr. Topping is diligent in his pastoral visitation, and in the care of the sick. His leadership, wise counsel, sympathetic understanding of problems which arise, and a deep sense of justice are appreciated by the Congregation. We are pleased to find that since last visitation, the number of families is the same, and that the downward trend due to rural depopulation has been halted. It is gratifying to note that the number of baptisms has substantially increased and this augurs well for the numerical strength of the Congregation in the future. It is also pleasing to record that the average attendance at public worship since the last visitation shows a 50% increase; that much care is devoted to the worthy rendering of the service of praise; that the number of children on the roll of the Sunday School has increased from 20 to 62 and that the weekly attendance is good. The number of communicants on the roll is the same as at the last visitation and there has been a slight increase in the average attendance at the Lord's Supper. Two young people were admitted to communion last year.

The Presbytery congratulate the Congregation on the condition of the Church and have taken grateful note of the improvements which have been undertaken since last visitation, at considerable expense — the re-slating of the Church; the installation of oil-fired heating and electrical systems; the carpeting of the aisles and front of the Church and the concreting of the paths. This indicates the love which the people have for the Church of their fathers. The Presbytery however, draw the attention of the Congregation to the spread of woodworm in the ceiling joists, roof trusses and church furniture. This should be treated as a matter of urgency, otherwise, if allowed to go by default, it will involve the Congregation in a serious financial outlay. Also the dwelling house in connection with the former school requires some repairs and improvements. A local authority grant can be obtained for this work.

The condition of the property known as the Cottage, gives rise to deep concern and we suggest that the architect's advice regarding its demolition should be seriously considered, as the Congregation

could be held legally responsible for damages, should anyone be injured by the collapse of any part of the structure, if working near it. Such a risk is too great to take. The Presbytery recommend that the whole legal position of one property known as the Cottage, should be clarified, and if possible the lands should be let on a yearly basis by public auction. The Presbytery would further suggest, that the Committee review now, the present situation with regard to the value of the letting of the Manse and lands and that thereafter it be reviewed at three yearly intervals.

The Presbytery urge that more members of the Congregation take the periodicals of the Church. At the moment there are 14 copies of the Presbyterian Herald, None of Daybreak, Woman's Work 23 and none of The Christian Irishman taken. These numbers could be increased.

The Presbytery note that two marriage registers are missing since the last visitation viz., those from 12/4/1845 to 11/2/1868 and from 31/2/1869 to 6/9/1911.\*

The Presbytery suggest that the insurance coverage on the Church should be increased to at least £30,000, and the Manse to £7000.

The Presbytery would further suggest that the Congregation should seriously consider making a substantial contribution towards ministerial expenses.

The legal documents of the Church should be lodged for safe keeping either in the local bank or with the Solicitor. The Presbytery advise the Congregation to seriously consider appointing additional trustees and recommend that all bequests, if legally possible, be brought into the names of three persons e.g., the Minister, Treasurer and Secretary of the Congregation for the time being.

In conclusion, the Presbytery commend Minister, office-bearers and people to the God of all Grace and to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and appoint the Rev. H. S. Carser B.A., to read this finding on a convenient Sabbath and address the people upon it.

#### **Proposed Building of a Church Hall**

On 11th May 1972 a Congregational meeting was held in the Church to discuss the Committee's proposal to seriously consider the building of a Church Hall. Dr. Topping pointed out that to put the School House in order and to provide it with a Kitchen would cost in the region of £1500.00 and that, even then, the building would be very much restricted with regard to the use to which it could be put. The Committee had been informed that a Hall which could be used for many purposes and which included the provision of a vestry, would cost in the region of £6,000.00. If the Congregation could raise £4,000.00 then the Committee were prepared to go ahead with the project. The meeting was poorly

\* These marriage registers were never located and the Church has lost part of its history as a result.

attended and feelings were mixed. The Chairman asked if there were any present who would be prepared to support the project financially and five people promised a total of £550.00. The meeting closed without any final decision being made. In September, 1973 a Fete was held in Mr. Roy Harpur's field at Divenagh to help raise money for the building of a hall. The total from this venture was £981.

### **Election of New Committee**

In September 1975 an election was held and the following people were voted on to the new Committee — William King (Carrowmannon), William King (Lurgana), John King, Roy Harpur, Noel Crozier, Winston McCormick, David McMullan, Harold Patterson, Wesley McCormick, Bertie Edgar, Bertie Flanagan, John Gibbons and Robert Freeburn.

### **Rev. Topping becomes Dr. Topping**

On 28th May, 1976 the Presbyterian Theological Faculty of Ireland conferred on Mr. Topping the honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity and to mark this event the people of Jerrettspass and Kingsmills got together in Jerrettspass Hall to honour their beloved Minister.

Rev. J. Adair, Annalong was the Chairman for the occasion. After a very enjoyable supper, the Rev. and Mrs. Topping received several presentations from the two Congregations.

Mr. Topping received a wallet of notes amounting to £500.00 presented by the Clerk of Session and robes which were presented by Mrs. W. Patterson, Jerrettspass and Mrs. Doran, Kingsmills. Mrs. Topping received jewellery which was presented by Mrs. G. Patterson and Mrs. H. Ross, as well as a bouquet of flowers handed over by Joanne Moody and Shirley King.

Mr. Adair, speaking at the presentation, said that Dr. Topping was a man of great sincerity. He was never afraid to say what was on his mind. When he came up before the Board of Examiners just before passing out from the Assembly College and was asked, did he accept the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church he answered, "Yes, but with certain reservations". Some eyebrows were raised but he was passed.

In November of the following year Dr. Topping retired. The Kingsmills Congregation held an evening in the Church to mark the occasion. The Rev. Scott from Tyrone's Ditches acted as Chairman and there were the usual speeches and special items from the choir. Miss Minnie Patton made a presentation to Dr. Topping and Mrs. B. Edgar gave Mrs. Topping a present on behalf of the choir. It was a very informal evening with Dr. and Mrs. Topping moving around the Congregation and bidding individual farewells to all present.

The photograph below was taken at this farewell evening and shows from left to right — Mr. Thomas McCormick, Rev. Scott, Mrs. Topping, Dr. Topping and Mr. Harry Ross.



#### **Union between First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass and Kingsmills**

With both Churches now vacant, following Dr. Topping's retirement, the time had arrived to join these Congregations together under one Minister. At a meeting of the Union Commission held in Church House, Belfast on 29th November 1977, terms were drawn up for such a union. The terms were as follows :-

1. That the Congregation of First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass and Kingsmills be united as from 1st January, 1978.
2. Each Congregation shall maintain its separate identity with its own Kirk Session, congregational committee and finance.
3. Each Congregation shall have the right to appoint representatives to the superior Courts of the Church.
4. In the choice of a Minister, the two Congregations shall act together as one Congregation and the two Kirk Sessions as one Kirk Session.
5. The stated services shall be — Kingsmills 10.30 a.m. First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass 12.00 noon or at such other hours as the Kirk Sessions acting together shall determine.
6. That the Stipends be : First Drumbanagher and Jerrettspass £900, Retired Minister £100 per annum, Kingsmills £1000, with fractions 40% and initial ministerial expenses £200, in each case, Kingsmills to pay the Minister in active duty the net

income from Manse letting. Ministers National Insurance, Endowment Insurance, Holiday Supplies, Telephone Rental, Rent, Rates, Taxes and maintenance of Jerrettspass Manse to be borne in the proportions. Jerrettspass and First Drumbanagher one-half, Kingsmills one-half.

7. That the Minister reside in Jerrettspass Manse.
8. That the law of the Church be observed with regard to Kingsmills Manse.
9. That leave of call be given on these terms.

**Rev. J. A. Thompson B.A., B.D (1978 - 79)**

During the short vacancy which arose as a result of Dr. Topping's retirement, the Rev. David McIlwrath from Newry acted as Convener.

On 30th March 1978 when James Armstrong Thompson was inducted as his assistant a new chapter began in the history of both Churches. He was the first Minister of the new union.



Mr. Thompson was not a countryman. He was brought up in the Great Victoria Street Congregation in Belfast and attended Methodist College. On leaving School he worked for about two years in, what was then, the Belfast Corporation Welfare Department as a Social Worker. This was during the commencement of the 'troubles' in 1968 and '69 when there were all sorts of social problems in the city.

In 1970 he gave up the work to attend Queen's University and then Assembly's College where he gained a B.A. and B.D. Degree.

In 1977 he was ordained the assistant Minister in McQuiston Memorial Church on the Castlereagh Road. He completed a year there before taking up the appointment in Jerrettspass and Kingsmills where he was to work the second year of his assistantship under the Rev. McIlwrath.

Barbara, his wife, had also been a member of the Great Victoria Street Church and for two years prior to their marriage she had worked in Zambia contributing in many ways to the Church in that Country.

The induction service was held in Kingsmills and was conducted by the Moderator of the Newry Presbytery, Rev. R. G. Johnston B.A., M.Th. from Kilkeel. The charge was given by Rev. R. Birney, B.A., B.D., Downshire Road and a reception then followed in Jerrettspass Church Hall.

Mr. and Mrs. Thompson had a difficult start. The Jerrettspass Manse had not been renovated in time for their arrival and they found themselves living in a bungalow belonging to Miss Edith Watson at Tandragee. This meant a great deal of travelling for Mr. Thompson. As well as this he had to cope with a number of very sudden and tragic deaths in both Congregations during that year.

The Church Hall was also underway and he had to chair quite a number of meetings in relation to its construction and subsequent opening. These would have continued quite late and often members of the Committee would go outside to step out the length of a wall or to see how many blocks would be needed.

Writing of his time in Kingsmills, Mr. Thompson says — “Thomas McCormick was a great friend and a tower of strength”. Mr. McCormick took him around the Congregation and introduced him to the people.

Mr. Thompson had the idea of distributing ‘Family Forms’ within the Congregation. These were filled in giving details of the members of each family and this was a useful record for the Minister as he travelled round.

### Opening of New Church Hall



The work started on the new Church Hall in 1976. The Contract for the building was given to Mr. W. A. Coulter, Kilkeel. The old School was demolished and building began directly behind this. After two years of hard work it was opened on Saturday, 4th November, 1978 at a cost of £25,210.00. It had been due to open four weeks earlier but this had to be postponed following the shooting of U.D.R. man Mr. Charles Henning, an Office Bearer in Jerrettspass Church.



*Pictured at the opening of the new Church Hall are (left to right), Mr. T. McCormick, Mr. H. Ross, Dr. R. Topping, Rev. J. Thompson, Rev. R. G. Johnston and Rev. D. McIlwraith.*

The service of dedication was held in the Church and was conducted by the Moderator of the Newry Presbytery, Rev. R. G. Johnston, B.D. M.Th. Kilkeel. Rev. Dr. R. Topping M.A. who had put so much effort into the earlier planning of the Hall was the special guest.

He conducted the act of Dedication and gave the address. The offering taken up amounted to more than £600.00. Following the service everyone was invited into the new Hall for tea and they were given the opportunity to look around it.

Since that time the Hall has been put to good use with a meeting of some kind being held nearly every night of the week.

At present it is used as follows :-

Sunday	Junior Sunday School	9.45	-	10.30 a.m.
	Children's Church	11.00	-	11.30 a.m.
	Junior Youth Fellowship (alternate Sundays)	3.00	-	4.30 p.m.
	Senior Youth Fellowship (alternate Sundays)	7.00	-	9.00 p.m.
Monday	Badminton Club			

Tuesday	Midweek meeting for Bible Study and prayer (alternate months)	8.00 p.m.
Wednesday	Badminton P.W.A. Meeting on fourth Wednesday of each month	
Thursday	Free	
Friday	Junior Badminton	
Saturday	Youth Club	

In 1986, the interior of the Hall was completely repainted, the work being done voluntarily by some members of the Badminton Club.

#### Departure of Mr. Thompson

After completing the year of assistantship, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson and their daughter Christine left these Congregations to go to Dervock Church in North Antrim. They have now been there for eight years. Christine is nine and they have two other children — Pamela (6) and Jennifer (4). Their youngest child, Andrew, died in infancy.

The Church in Dervock has about 150 families and two-thirds of these come from the farming community around the village.

In Mr. Thompson's time there the Sunday School has doubled to over seventy children and there is now a Youth Fellowship. He is in the Dervock and District Community Association and the children attend the village School. At the time of writing the Thompson family are very happy in their work and they feel very much as if they are in the centre of God's will.

#### The effect of the 'Troubles' on the Congregation

Like most Congregations in Ulster, Kingsmills has suffered at the hands of terrorists since the present campaign began in 1969.

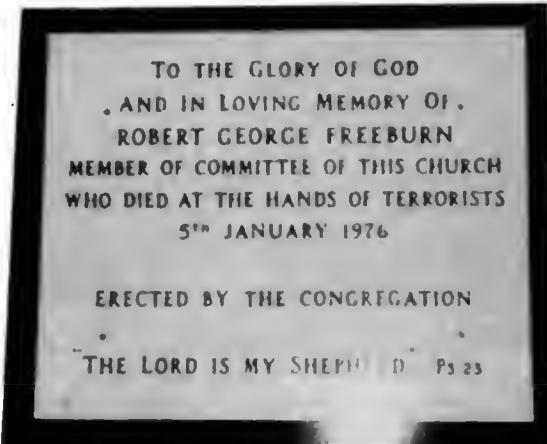
One of the worst atrocities ever to have taken place in these last twenty years, happened just yards from the Church. It has since become known as the 'Kingsmills Massacre'. On the evening of the 5th January, 1976 a mini bus, carrying workers from the factory in Glenanne to their homes around Bessbrook, was stopped by a gang of terrorists. The men were taken from the bus and after allowing the one Roman Catholic workman to go free they shot the eleven men remaining. Ten of them died instantly and one man was seriously wounded.

Among the dead was Robert Freeburn, from Eshwary. He had been elected to the Church committee only months earlier.

The whole community was stunned. At the service in Church the following Sunday morning the Congregation stood in silent tribute to the late Mr. Freeburn and Dr. Topping read a letter of sympathy from the members of Jerretspass Church.

A special meeting of Session and Committee, held directly after this service decided to send a message of sympathy to Mrs. Freeburn.

In April 1978 a tablet was erected by the Congregation in memory of their former member of Committee.



All that now marks the spot where this dreadful massacre took place, is a simple wooden cross by the roadside.

Each year on the anniversary, the families and friends of those who were murdered come here and hold a simple service of remembrance.



On Easter Tuesday, 17th April 1979, another member of the Church, Reserve Constable Robert Lockhart from Lisnalea Park, was killed by terrorists. He died along with three colleagues when their Land Rover was blown to pieces as they drove past a parked van loaded with 1,000 lbs of explosives on the Millvale Road, Bessbrook.

The funeral was an official R.U.C. one and the several hundred strong procession of mourners walked the whole way from Lisnalea Park to Kingsmills led by the R.U.C. band and top ranking officers including Sir Kenneth Newman, the Chief Constable.

The Church was vacant at the time and the service was conducted by Rev. Dr. Topping and Rev. D. McIlwrath as well as other clergy.

Two years later, on the 15th April 1981 a Communion set was presented to the Church in memory of Constable Lockhart by his comrades in the R.U.C.

Then at the beginning of 1980, Clifford Lundy, who lived in the School House, was murdered at his own front door. It happened on the evening of the 2nd January and Mr. Lundy was ambushed just after parking his car on his return from work. He had been a member of the U.D.R. since its formation but had resigned two years previously.

His funeral took place on the fourth anniversary of the Kingsmills Massacre which had happened less than half a mile away. After a service held in Kingsmills Church he was buried in the family plot in Mountnorris. Mr. Lundy was, for a time, the sexton of Kingsmills.

#### **MEMBERS OF KINGSMILLS CHURCH WHO WERE KILLED IN THE PRESENT 'TROUBLES'**



*Mr. Robert Freeburn*



*Mr. Robert Lockhart*



*Mr. Clifford Lundy*

## The Memorial Book

Following these terrorist deaths and as a result of a suggestion from the Church Architectural Committee, a memorial book was erected at the front of the Church.

It was placed in a glass fronted case made by Edgar Patterson and the names of those who had died were inserted.

Mrs. Glenda Black did the script writing.

This work was carried out in the Autumn of 1981.

### Rev. T. V. Patterson B.A., B.D. (1979 - 1985)

After a short vacancy following the resignation of Rev. J. Thompson, Mr. Patterson was installed on 17th May, 1979 as the second Minister of the united Churches of 1st Drumbanagher and Jerretspass and Kingsmills.



Thomas Victor Patterson was born at Dromore, Co. Down and he attended 1st Dromore Presbyterian Church. He was a Sunday School Teacher and a member of Committee in that church. After leaving school he began work as a Post Office engineer in Belfast and three years later he moved to a post with the Plessey Telecommunications Company in Ballynahinch where he remained for a further five years.

When he decided to enter the ministry, he had first of all to do an 'A' level course at the College of Business Studies in Belfast. He then went to Queen's University and Assembly's College from where he graduated in 1977. In the same year he was licensed by the Presbytery of Dromore and he worked as a summer assistant in Mourne Presbyterian Church, Kilkeel. The following year he commenced his two year assistantship in West Kirk Church on the Shankill Road in Belfast.

It must have been quite a change to move from this loyalist area to what was then branded as 'bandit country', but Mr. Patterson knew that this was what God was calling him to do.

The Installation took place in Kingsmills. The Minister of West Kirk Church, the Rev. Brian Moore and 100 members of the Congregation were present. Taking part in the service were Rev. D. McKee, Rev. James Adair, Rev. D. McGaughey and Rev. M. Barr. The Moderator of the General Assembly, the Rt. Rev. Dr. David Burke spoke at the reception which followed assuring the Congregation that, although in a border area, they were not forgotten about or isolated.

Mr. and Mrs. Patterson and their eighteen month old daughter Sharon moved into the Manse and they were there for six and a half years. During that time a son, David, was born.

In the years which followed there was a marked spiritual growth in the Congregation. One of the first things which Mr. Patterson organised was a weekly mid-week meeting followed by a time of prayer. This was probably the first time there had been such a meeting since the 1920's. Over the years it has been well attended and many people have benefited from it.

In 1979 the large Financial Reports for the Presbytery of Newry were no longer published and individual Churches were responsible for the publication of their own report.

Mr. Patterson began the first and each preceding report with a 'minister's letter'. The first one written in February 1980 read as follows :-

Time moves so quickly. It hardly seems that a year is almost gone since we came to Kingsmills and yet how much has happened in that time.

We received and appreciated very much the warm welcome from the Members of the Congregation. It has been quite a job to sit in so many homes, trying to sort out members of Families and relations. Some names are still hard to remember.

There have been some encouragements in the life and worship of our Congregation. It is good to see the number at public worship on Sunday. Some, because of work that has to be done, have to make a very definite commitment to be there — this shows a real interest in spiritual things.

Our meeting on Tuesday evenings for Bible study and prayer has received a good interest from both Congregations. It is gratifying to see the interest in the Bible and the desire there is to pray for God's blessing on our work. This is a meeting for everyone.

At this time we are in the midst of electing additional elders to the Kirk Session. This is an extremely responsible task, may all of us seek to encourage and pray for the Kirk Session in the future.

The greatest encouragement of all in the life of any Congregation is to see the fruit of the gospel as men, women and young people respond to God's word. There are those who have come to know the Lord Jesus as Saviour — what a joy this is — let us pray for them. There are those who have been helped in times of trouble and those whose faith has been strengthened. It is encouraging to see the increasing fellowship amongst the Members of the Congregation. We give God all the praise for His goodness to us.

A word of gratitude and appreciation to all those who work so hard in Session, Committee, Sunday School and other organisations. There are so many jobs that must be done, we need many hands to do the work.

Finally we remember the families who have suffered this past year through bereavement and sickness. To all who have lost loved ones, we commit them to the grace of our Heavenly Father.

**T. V. PATTERSON**

As was mentioned in this letter, the Church was in the process of electing elders. Mr. Patterson preached for several Sundays on the responsibility of this office and the qualities required for the eldership.

Each family was given a leaflet to read pertaining to this.

An election subsequently took place and on Sunday 27th April, 1980, three new elders were ordained — John Gibbons, Roy Harpur and David McMullan.

### **THE ELDERSHIP**

Your Kirk Session has decided that the time has come to appoint additional Elders to its membership. This is a very important occasion in the history of the congregation, and should be approached with much thought and prayer, for in choosing those who are to occupy this office a number of considerations have to be borne in mind.

Our Church holds that in apostolic times Bishops and Elders were different titles for the same office. All Elders rules i.e., were responsible for the government and discipline of the Church, but some of them (teaching Elders, i.e., Ministers) also laboured in the Word and Doctrine. Thus, the Eldership is a spiritual office concerned together with the Minister in the rule and pastoral oversight of the congregation, and is distinct from, though closely associated with, the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

#### **Admission to the Office**

The Kirk Session, subject to the permission of the Presbytery, determines when an addition to its membership is necessary, the

number of Elders to be added and the method of election, knowing that it is God who qualified men and women with the necessary spiritual gifts, and it is for the congregation to choose such, and for the Presbytery, acting for the whole Church, to ordain or set them apart to the office of Elder.

### Standards of the Elder

The New Testament is very specific concerning the character and qualities of those suitable for Eldership. (See Scripture references below). An Elder should be of acknowledged Christian character, in the full communion of the congregation, an upholder of the Church's creed, doctrine and constitution, and a regular attender at all services of Public Worship and other important meetings of the congregation.

Elders should be of sound judgment, quiet and circumspect — wise, prudent and watchful. They should be exemplary in integrity and conduct and of acknowledged piety; maintain a worshipping Christian home and have manifest concern for the peace and spiritual prosperity of the congregation.

### The Elder's Task

As a member of Kirk Session the Elder has both an individual and a corporate responsibility.

(a) The Elder shares with the other members of the Kirk Session the rule and pastoral care of the congregation and has a special responsibility to the families in the district to which he is assigned, as well as exercising an outreach to those who hold loosely to the congregation or who have no Church connection.

(b) Elders in Session are responsible for assessing the suitability of those who wish to come to the Lord's Table for the first time and thus for admitting them to full membership of the Church. They are also responsible for approving those to whom baptism is to be administered either as the children of believing parents or as adults on confession of faith as the case may be.

(c) While the conduct of public worship is the responsibility of the minister, for which he is answerable to the Presbytery which appointed him, it is the Kirk Session's duty to have oversight of the congregation and to supervise all congregational organisations and other activities. Furthermore, as permanent members of the Congregational Committee, ruling Elders share responsibility for the material requirements of the Church's life and work.

(d) It is also the duty of the Kirk Session to keep certain records, e.g., Minutes of Meetings, Communion Roll and Baptismal register.

(e) The Kirk Session plays its part in the government of the Church by its representative appointed to attend as a full member in the higher courts of the Church and report back to it.

Those eligible to vote in an election of Elders must be both communicants, and contributors to Church funds. It is hoped, therefore, that all members eligible will consider it their prayerful duty to exercise their privilege and responsibility in voting for suitable candidates for ordination to the office of ruling Elder.

### Scriptural References concerning Eldership

**Old Testament** : There are very many references to the Elders of Israel in the Old Testament, e.g., Ex. 3 : 16; 12 : 21; 18 : 12; Deut. 21 : 1; Sam. 5 : 13; 1 Chr. 11 : 3; Ezek. 20 : 1.

**New Testament** : Matt. 20 : 20-28; John 13 : 1-17; Acts 4 : 23; Acts 15 : 4, 6; 23 : 20; 17; 1 Tim. 3 : 1-17; 1 Tim. 5 : 17; Titus 5-9; Jas. 5 : 14; Peter 5 : 1-4; Rom. 8 : 12; 1 Cor. 12 : 28.

### United Congregational Mission

In the spring of 1982 the Congregation was informed of the Kirk Session's decision to hold a United Mission. They were asked to make a note of the dates and pray for God's blessing on it.

So the Mission commenced on the 6th February 1983, and it lasted for two weeks. The speaker was Rev. Jackson Buick, a man who had spent several years with the Belfast City Mission before entering the Presbyterian Ministry. At the time of the United Mission here he was the Presbyterian Chaplain to H.M. Prison, Belfast.

For the Congregation of Kingsmills, a mission in their own Church was a completely new experience. Not since Mr. Meeke's early days had there been such an event. It was very well attended during the first week in Jerretspass and the second one in Kingsmills. There was a joint choir and there were special singers and speakers as well.

During that fortnight many people were blessed and challenged and the Church here has benefited as a result.

In Mr. Patterson's time a united, monthly, Sunday evening meeting was held and each spring following the conclusion of the mid-week meetings for the year, he held an eight week session for the study of the catechism.

### Structural repairs since 1979

With an increased number of cars it was decided that the amount of parking space was inadequate so in 1979 the old school playground was converted into a car park and this has proved to be a very useful addition. The cost was £1256.00. The following year the church roof was insulated at a cost of £291.00.

In 1983 all the windows in the Church were replaced — P.V.C. double glazed ones were put in. This was to be an expensive job

so families were given the opportunity to finance a window in memory of a loved one.

This four families did and the total cost for all the windows was £6160.24. The families who donated windows were — The Watson family, Drumcrow; Cartmill family, Rathcarbery; McCullough family, Tullywinny; Mr. H. Ross, Lisnalea. Almost another £3,000.00 was spent during 1983 and 1984 in replastering, replacing spouting, rebuilding the chimney and reroofing the Porch. Then the entire Church was repainted in 1985-86. This cost £2200.00. In the same year the drainage at the East wall of the Church was repaired and again this work was done voluntarily.

With all these repairs in the last ten years or so the Church building itself is very sound structurally, one hundred and fifty years after it was built.

#### **Resignation of Mr. Patterson**

In November 1985 Mr. Patterson said farewell to the Congregation, having accepted a call to Buckna in Co. Antrim.

During his time in Kingsmills he had worked very hard not only in the Church itself but out among the people. He paid frequent visits to their homes and he took a genuine interest in every member of each household.

In his capacity as chaplain to Cloughreagh Old People's Home he held monthly services there and he built up a good relationship with the old people and also the elderly among the Congregation.

During the vacancy in Second Newtownhamilton and Creggan he was their Convener and he showed a great concern for the people in that area, visiting and helping them in whatever way he could.

Under Mr. Patterson's ministry in Kingsmills the Youth Organisations and the mid-week group grew both spiritually and numerically. Church attendance also increased and people could not fail to have noticed the genuine concern which their Minister had for them.

On Friday evening 1st November the Congregation said farewell to Mr. Patterson at a function in the Church Hall. Mr. Harry Ross, Clerk of Session presided and the evening opened with the singing of a hymn and a prayer. Musical items were provided by a section of the Heatherbrook Band from Bessbrook and there were also contributions from members of the Church including a recitation by Mrs. Amy Cartmill. In it she paid tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Patterson and family. Other tributes were paid by Mr. John Gibbons on behalf of the Sunday School, Mr. Roy Harpur, the Session, Mr. John King, the Committee and Rev. Rankin and Rev. Van-Os.

Mr. Thomas McCormick, the senior member of Session presented a gift cheque from the congregation to Mr. Patterson and Miss Edith

Watson handed over a dinner set to Mrs. Patterson. Book tokens were presented to Sharon and David Patterson by Miss Noreen King. The Cloughreagh Home residents presented him with a Tyrone Crystal vase. It was handed over by Miss Susan Freeburn who is a member of Kingsmills.



*Presentation group at farewell evening to the Patterson family — from left at the rear, Mr. Mervyn Wright, Mrs. Carol Patterson, Mr. Harry Ross, Mr. Thomas McCormick, Rev. and Mrs. Patterson, Mrs. Elizabeth Harpur, Miss Edith Watson, Miss Noreen King and Mr. Roy Harpur. Front — Miss Susan Freeburn and Sharon and David Patterson.*

## CHAPTER 14

### THE PRESENT

**Rev. F. J. Gibson B.Sc., B.D. (1986 -**

During the vacancy of almost one year, the Rev. R. Nixon, Bessbrook was in charge. He appointed four men to conduct the Sunday services on a weekly basis — Mr. Dennis Flanagan, Mr. Bert Finlay, Mr. Mervyn Moffett and Mr. William Bingham.

Then on Thursday 2nd October 1986, following a unanimous call, the Rev. F. J. Gibson was installed as the third minister of the United Churches of First Drumbanagher and Jerretspass and Kingsmills.



The Installation Service was held in Kingsmills and as members attending were so large, the proceedings had to be relayed into the Church Hall. A sign of our modern times was that this installation service was recorded on video, leaving the congregation with an excellent record for future historical reference.

The charge to Mr. Gibson and the congregation, was given by the Rev. David Maxwell (Ryans and Brookvale). Following the installation tea was served, after which members of the Presbytery and Session Clerks welcomed the Gibson family to the area. Many relatives and former acquaintances of Mr. Gibson were present, including a large number of people from 1st Portadown congregation. Their minister Rev. Knowles, described his former assistant, Mr. Gibson as a man of many talents and abilities, always eager to carry out his duties faithfully.

Francis Joseph Gibson, was born in Banbridge in 1947. He was educated at the Abercorn Primary School and Banbridge Technical College. From 1966 - 1970 he was a student at Queen's University, Belfast where he gained a First Class Honours Degree in Physics (B.Sc.). In the following two years he was involved in postgraduate research in the Department of Pure and Applied Physics at Queen's University. This was followed by a further two years as a research engineer with Harland and Wolff, Belfast.

At this stage he knew that the Lord was calling him to some kind of full time service — but he was not certain where this would be. He was accepted as a student for the Presbyterian Church and he completed his studies in June 1977 with a B.D. degree. However, he did not feel that the time was appropriate for him and his family to proceed to a pastoral ministry.

He returned to work, this time in the construction industry with Hamilton and Preston Ltd, Enniskillen and latterly with Gibson Brothers, Banbridge.

In 1984 he reapplied to the Presbyterian Church and was accepted as a student assistant in the congregation of First Portadown, where he was duly ordained in June 1985. It was after serving for one year as an ordained assistant to the Rev. Desmond Knowles in First Portadown that he received the unanimous call to our churches.

Mr. and Mrs. Gibson and their three sons live in Jerrettspass Manse and have settled well into both congregations. They take an active part in the various church activities and the welfare of the congregation in general.

#### **A Final Word from the Clerk of Session**

In the past year in which Mr. Gibson has been our minister, he has been a faithful witness for the Lord Jesus and attentive to everything connected with the welfare of both congregations and the advancement of God's Kingdom.

He has conducted a very successful mid-week, dealing for some time with how we got our Bible and then giving us an insight into the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Being new to the area, he has also been in great demand for special services and this, combined with visiting all the families, has kept him very busy.

Mrs. Gibson has played an important part assisting her husband in his various duties and she has also taken on the position of President of the P.W.A.

Along with their eldest son, Kenneth, they found time to help at the Holiday Bible Club in July and this was greatly appreciated.

I wish them and the congregation continued blessing for the future.

**HARRY ROSS**

## **PART TWO**

## CHAPTER 15

# CHURCH OFFICE BEARERS

This chapter gives a record of the Elders of our church from 1788 and of the Trustees from when they were first appointed in 1870. It has been impossible to draw up a list of the members of the committee during the two hundred year period but most of those who have served since 1911 are shown among the list of office bearers contained in the Financial Reports, shown at the end of the chapter. There is also an account of the sextons who have faithfully looked after the building and grounds for the last one hundred years.

### Elders of the Church

With the help of church records and old gravestones it has been possible to trace a good number, though not all, of the elders from 1788 - 1850. After that date the names of all the elders are known.

The four founding elders in 1788 were :-

Thomas McIlroy — He was only thirty four years of age at the time, and he was elected Ruling Elder. He held this position until his death in 1844, at the age of ninety. Mr. McIlroy farmed in the townland of Rathcarbery, near Lisnalea crossroads. The name McIlroy was very common in Lisnalea and Crankey in the early part of the nineteenth century. A large flat stone which can be clearly read, marks the McIlroy burial plot, just behind the church.

John Todd — He lived in the townland of Lisadian and the ruins of his house can still be seen, on land now owned by Mr. Jackie Herron. He attended many of the early Secession Burgher Synod meetings with Mr. Beatty. The Todd family were still farming in Lisadian in 1864 but their names do not appear on any church records after this date.

John Best — thought to have come from Divernagh.

John Gourley — He came from Divernagh and like Thomas McIlroy, he must have been a young man when he became an elder, as he was still in this position in 1840 (fifty-two years after the formation of the church). The Gourley family were connected with Kingsmills up until the beginning of this century, when their names disappeared from church records.

There are no records available for the years 1823 - 1840. But in that year, apart from Thomas McIlroy and John Gourley, there were three other elders :

James Patterson — from Cavanakill. His grandson, John was a minister in Co. Monaghan.

William Patterson — from Lurgana.

John Irvine — from Carrowmannon. He died in 1849 aged eighty-two years and there is a tombstone to his memory in the churchyard.

### **Election of Elders 1850**

By this date there were only two elders surviving, so Mr. Henry put forward to the Newry Presbytery, the names of six men, whom he considered suitable for the eldership of the church. They were examined by Rev. Morrison (2nd Markethill) and Rev. Mateer (Kilkeel) concerning their knowledge of the doctrine and government of the Church.

Apparently only two were deemed suitable and two months later, Mr. Henry submitted another five names. They were also examined by two visiting ministers and by September of that year only four of the combined group of eleven men, were considered fit for the eldership.

These were :-

George McCullough — from Tullywinney. He died in 1900, aged ninety-four years.

Mark Patterson — from Lurgana. He died around 1860.

William Qua — from Lisadian. He died in 1878 aged eighty-seven years.

William Dillon — from Tullyhappy. He died in 1874 aged seventy years.

In 1861, following the death of Mark Patterson, James Gray from Lisadian was elected to the eldership. He died in 1894 aged eighty-three years.

In October 1875, two new elders were ordained :

John H. Edgar — from Drumnahoney. He died in 1905, aged eighty-seven years.

James Patterson — from Lurgana, who died in 1907, aged seventy-six years. He was a son of James Patterson, an elder in the 1840's. These with Messrs. Gray, Qua and McCullough made a total of five.

When Mr. Qua died, Robert Harpur J.P., Divernagh was elected in his place. He died aged eighty-seven in 1908. By 1890, there were six elders, the five above and Joseph King from Outlacken.

He died in 1898. In 1902, only two elders remained — James Patterson and Robert Harpur. So four new men were ordained. These were :-

**William Andrews** — from Carrowmannon. He died in 1941, aged ninety years.

**Robert Taylor** — from Mullaglass. He left Kingsmills some time before 1915 to join the Bessbrook congregation.

**John Watson Dillon** — from Tullyhappy.

**Thomas Elliott** — from Rathcarbery. He died in 1928.

In 1916, it was decided to hold an election for new elders. The three men nominated declined to serve and so the election was postponed until 1920. Even then there were some who would not accept the position and, with Mr. Torrie's leaving and a vacancy arising, new elders were not ordained until November 1922. The following four men accepted the position and brought the total number of elders to seven.

**John Boardman** — Knockavannon, died 1926.

**Acheson Elliott** — Drumherriff, died 1975.

**John Harrison** — Drumnahoney, died 1942.

**William King** — Carrowmannon, died 1961.

By 1945, only two elders remained. The last election had been held twenty-three years previously and it would have seemed advisable to hold another one. However it was not until 1962, forty years after the previous election, that the congregation was given the opportunity to elect new elders. The five men who accepted the position were —

**Robert Wallace** — Rathcarbery, died 1975.

**Harry Ross** — Lisnalea.

**William Watson** — Drumcrow, died 1985.

**Thomas Moffett** — Lisadian, died 1980.

**Thomas McCormick** — Divernagh.

The next election of elders took place early in Mr. Patterson's ministry. The three men who agreed to serve were ordained on 27th April 1980. They were :-

**David McMullan** — Lurgana.

**Roy Harpur** — Divernagh.

**John Gibbons** — Derrycughan.

These three with Thomas McCormick and Harry Ross are the current elders at the time of writing, with Harry Ross being the Clerk of Session.

## CHURCH ELDERS 1987



*Back row (left to right) — David McMullan, John Gibbons, Roy Harpur.  
Front row — Thomas McCormick, Rev. Gibson, Harry Ross.*

## CHURCH TRUSTEES

As the property and buildings, connected with the church, had increased from around 1870, there was a growing need for the appointment of Trustees within the church.

The original Trustees were appointed at a congregational meeting on 21st June 1886. They were as follows :-

John King, The Glen

John McCormick, Divernagh

Robert Harpur J.P., Divernagh House

James Patterson, Lurgana

James Paul, Creggans

William Harpur, Lisadian House (a brother of Robert)

John Elliott (junior), Lisadian

24th September 1911, New Appointments were made. John King, John Elliott and John McCormick were still alive and added to these were :-

Robert Harpur, Divernagh House

William Auterson, Mullaglass (later joined Bessbrook cong.)

John Watson Dillon, Tullyhappy

**James Bell, Lisadian (he moved to Tynan in 1918)**

**Robert S. Rogers, Tullywinney**

**Hugh S. Patterson, Lurgana**

By 1947, only Robert Harpur was alive and so Rev. Graham organised the appointment of six more men. On 13th July that year the following became Trustees :-

**Acheson Elliott, Drumherriff**

**James King, Lurgana House**

**Robert Doran, Whitecross**

**Thomas King, Cavanakill**

**William Edgar, Drumnahoney**

**William Elliott, Lisadian**

**1973 Appointment of Trustees.** At this time only three trustees were still alive — Robert Doran, Acheson Elliott and William Elliott. The following were appointed :-

**William King, Carrowmannon**

**William King, Lurgana House**

**Roy Harpur, Divernagh House**

**Harry Ross, Lisnalea**

**Wesley McCormick, Divernagh**

**Bertie Edgar, Lisnalea**

All six men mentioned above, who were newly appointed in 1973, continue to oversee the Church property at the time of writing.

### **CHURCH SEXTONS**

When we think of the sextonship of the church, then the one family which comes to mind are the Croziers. The first church sexton is thought to have been Robert John Crozier. He was in that position as far back as 1870. His son, Robert, succeeded him around 1885. He married a Miss Susan McAlpin and for nearly fifty years they were responsible for the upkeep of the church buildings and grounds. They lived at Kingsmills.

In 1901, a new agreement was made between the Church Committee and Robert Crozier. He was to fulfil the following duties —

1. Light the furnace sufficiently early on Sabbath morning, to have the church heated to 60°F at 12 o'clock.
2. Attend to the filling of the pipes and cleaning of the grate and flues, according to printed instructions.
3. Attend to the opening of all doors as required.

4. Light the fire in the Session Room and keep the room in order.
5. All spoutings to be regularly cleaned.
6. Church to be washed out in April and October, swept out once a month and dusted every Saturday.
7. Windows to be kept clean.
8. Attend to receive coals and coke and other firing and put them in.
9. Generally to do the work of a sexton.

The arrangement was to terminate at any time on one month's notice and his salary was to be £4 annually. Those who paid the sexton to dig their graves were to pay him five shillings (25 pence) and the graves were to be dug to the depth required by the Sanitary Authorities. The sexton was to provide his own tools.

Unfortunately some people could not afford to pay the sexton so they dug their own graves, with little regard to the depth. This resulted in the problem of bad smells coming from some of the graves and to cope with this the committee reduced Mr. Crozier's fee for digging to three shillings and six-pence. This annoyed him and he resigned. However, the whole affair was soon sorted out by Mr. Meeke and the sexton resumed his usual duties. He was also a builder and over the years he carried out a great deal of work on the church property. During the war years a lot of repairs were carried out on the school, manse and cottage.

In 1917, another dispute erupted regarding the role of the church sexton, so a sub committee was appointed to make an up-to-date list of duties and these were as follows —

1. The church to be heated to a temperature of 60°F — duration of the seasons to be determined by the Committee.
2. Fires to be lit in the session room as required.
3. Fires to be lit in the school room for the Bible Class on Sabbath evenings and for choir practice on whatever night required.
4. Lamps also to be filled with oil, kept ready for use and lit as required.
5. Church washed out twice a year namely April and October.
6. Church and session room to be swept out once a month and dusted every Saturday.
7. Windows to be kept clean.
8. All spoutings frequently cleaned.
9. School room swept out and dusted every Saturday.
10. Graves dug as required to a depth of five feet for a fee of five shillings and provide his own tools.
11. Walks kept free of weeds. Grass in fore part of ground cut twice a year — June and October.

12. Shrubs to be trimmed every year in July.
13. Doors opened and shut as required and fuel delivered to be put in.

The salary was to be increased to £6-5-0 per year.

Mr. and Mrs. Crozier continued to keep the church property in first class order for as long as they were fit. Robert died in August 1932 and was buried in the churchyard. Taking part in the service was Rev. Meeke who, although ninety years of age, had travelled from Warrenpoint to pay his last respects. This says a lot for the esteem in which Robert Crozier was held.

His son, David and his wife then became the sextons and they continued to maintain the high standards of the previous generation. David was also a builder by trade and Mrs. Crozier later became the caretaker of Kingsmills school, serving out the school dinners and keeping the place clean and tidy. There was no running water in the school and she had to carry it in from the pump on the other side of the road. The work was hard then, in comparison to now. Mrs. Crozier retired from the school, shortly before it closed in 1958. Now one of the oldest members of the congregation, she still takes a keen interest in the church. She lives with her son, Noel, in what was once Lisdrumchor school.

In 1948, David Crozier gave up his job as sexton and Clifford Lundy carried on the work, in a temporary capacity for about a year. Mrs. Crozier then became the official sexton, helped by her son, Leslie.

On 4th October 1954, our present sexton Danny Wallace from Rathcarbery was appointed to the post. He was only seventeen years of age and as well as the usual duties of a sexton he was to dig the graves. His duties were to open the doors of the church and session house each Sunday and to have the buildings heated to a comfortable temperature. On a Saturday evening he would wheel the coke and coal from the stables and then light the fire. On a Sunday morning he had then to go down very early (about 6 a.m.) to stoke it up and make sure that there was sufficient heat for the 11 o'clock service. Sometimes it would be out. Oil lamps had to be lit for evening meetings.

The Church and session house were to be kept clean and tidy. In the 1950's and 60's there was a lot of hedging at the front of the church. This all had to be clipped and the gravel paths scuffed regularly to keep down the weeds. For this work the pay was ten shillings per week.

Now the sexton is only responsible for the church building itself. His annual salary is £156. The Church Hall and the grounds are the responsibility of the whole congregation and the work of cleaning the hall and cutting the grass etc is done voluntarily and on a rota basis.

## CHURCH SEXTONS



*Mr. and Mrs. Robert Crozier who were church sextons for nearly fifty years.*



*Mrs. David Crozier, daughter-in-law of Robert Crozier who continued in the work until 1954.*



*Mr. Danny Wallace — the present sexton.*

## CHURCH OFFICE BEARERS IN EACH DECADE THIS CENTURY

### FINANCIAL REPORT OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

*Year ended 31st December, 1911.*

MINISTER :  
Rev. JAMES MEEKE, B.A.

SESSION :

THE MINISTER, THOMAS A. ELLIOT,  
ROBERT TAYLOR, Clerk, J. WATSON DILLON,  
WILLIAM ANDREWS.

COMMITTEE :

THE ELDERS, JOHN BOARDMAN,  
WILLIAM DILLON, SIMPSON ELLIOT,  
JOHN McCORMICK, W. J. ELLIOT,  
JOHN KING, JAMES HARRISON,  
R. S. ROGERS, W. M. HUNTER,  
H. S. PATTERSON, JAMES PATTERSON,  
J. J. ANDREWS, ROBERT WATSON.

JOHN ELLIOT, Treasurer Sabbath Collections.

ROBERT HARPUR, Stipend Collectors.  
WM. AUTERSON,

JOSEPH J. KING, Secretary.

Mrs. JOHN ELLIOTT, Lissadian, Whitecross, Sustentation  
Agent.

Mrs. W. HARPUR, Treasurer Orphan Society.

Miss HARPUR, Divernagh, Secretary Zenana Auxiliary.

Miss MEEKE, The Manse, Treasurer "

### FINANCIAL REPORT OF KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*For Year ending 31st December, 1918.*

MINISTERS — REV. JAMES MEEKE, B.A.,  
REV. E. G. TORRIE, B.A.

SESSION :

THE MINISTERS, J. W. DILLON, Clerk;  
THOS. A. ELLIOTT, D.C., WM. ANDREWS.

COMMITTEE :

THE ELDERS, SIMPSON ELLIOTT,  
JOHN KING, JAMES HARRISON,  
ROBERT HARPUR, W. M. HUNTER,  
R. S. ROGERS, JAMES PATTERSON,  
H. S. PATTERSON, ROBERT WATSON,  
JOHN BOARDMAN, JAMES BELL,  
W. J. ELLIOTT,

Stipend Collector—ROBERT HARPUR.

Secretary—JAMES BELL.

Sustentation Agent—Mrs. J. W. DILLON, Tullyhappy, Bessbrook.  
Sec. and Treas. Zenana Auxiliary—Miss HARPUR, Divernagh House,  
Bessbrook.

Orphan Society Sec. and Treas.—Mrs. TORRIE, The Manse, Whitecross.

**Annual Report of Kingsmills  
Presbyterian Church**  
**FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1928**

**Ministers :**

REV. JAMES MEEKE, B.A.  
REV. JAMES GRAHAM, B.A.

**Elders :**

William Andrews	John W. Dillon
John Harrison	William King
	Acheson Elliott

**Pew Committee :**

John W. Dillon	Simpson Elliott
R. N. Harpur	Acheson Elliott
	James Harrison

**Cemetery Committee :**

Robert Watson	H. S. Patterson	James Harrison
Simpson Elliott	D. S. Elliott	D. Cartmill

**House and Grounds Committee :**

James Patterson	W. G. Paton
H. S. Patterson	Simpson Elliott
	R. Elliott

**General Committee :**

Members of Pew Committee  
Members of Cemetery Committee  
Members of House and Grounds Committee  
Members of Session

**Also**

R. S. Rodgers	Martin Andrews	Thomas Patterson
Thomas King	James King	Thomas McKnight
Robert Harrison	J. J. Kernaghan	

Church Officer — Robert Crozier, Lisadian, Whitecross  
Stipend Collector — R. N. Harpur, Divernagh House  
Sustentation Agent — Mrs. J. W. Dillon, Tullyhappy, Bessbrook  
Secretary and Treasurer, Zenana Auxiliary — Miss Harpur, Divernagh  
House  
Secretary and Treasurer, Orphan Society — Mrs. Graham, Kingsmills  
Manse  
Superintendent of Sabbath School — Acheson Elliott, Drumherriff  
Secretary, Girls' Auxiliary — Miss Lottie Elliott, Rathcarbery  
Secretary, I.B.R. Association — William Elliott, Lisadian  
Treasurer — J. W. Dillon, Tullyhappy, Bessbrook  
General Secretary — D. S. Elliott, Rathcarbery, Whitecross

## Annual Report of Kingsmills Presbyterian Church

For Year Ending 31st December, 1938

Minister . . . . Rev. JAMES GRAHAM, B.A.

### Elders

Wm. Andrews  
John W. Dillon  
John Harrison

W. King  
Acheson Elliott

### Committee

D. Cartmill, R. Doran, S. Elliott, R. N. Harpur, R. Harrison,  
T. King, T. McKnight, T. Moffatt, J. Patterson, J. S. Patterson,  
J. Patton, W. G. Patton

Church Officer ..... D. Crozier, Lisadian

Stipend Collector ..... R. N. Harpur, Divernagh House

Sustentation Agent ..... Mrs. S. Elliott, Lisadian

Sec. and Treas. Zenana Mission ..... Mrs. Harpur, Divernagh

Sec. and Treas. Orphan Society ..... Mrs. J. S. Patterson

Superintendent of Sabbath School ..... A. Elliott

Secretary I.B.R. Association ..... W. Elliott

Treasurer ..... J. W. Dillon, Tullyhappy

General Secretary ..... R. Doran, Whitecross

## Annual Report of Kingsmills Presbyterian Church

FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1948

### Minister :

REV. JAMES GRAHAM, B.A.

*Elders* :— W. King, Acheson Elliott

*Committee* :— D. Cartmill, S. Elliott, R. N. Harpur, R. Doran,  
T. King, T. McKnight, T. Moffatt, J. Patterson, Joe Patton,  
R. F. Harrison, W. G. Patton

*Church Officer* :— Clifford Lundy, Lisadian

*Stipend Collector* :— T. King, The Moor, Whitecross

*Sustentation Agent* :— Mrs. S. Elliott, Lisadian

*Second Treasurer Zenana Mission* :— Miss Ethel McCullough

*Treasurer Orphan Society* :— Rev. J. Graham

*Superintendent S. School* :— A. Elliott

*Secretary I.B.R.A.* :— W. Elliott

*Congregational Treasurer* :— A. Elliott

*F.W.O. Treasurer* :— Kinnier Elliott, Drumherriff

*General Secretary* :— R. Doran, Whitecross

ANNUAL REPORT OF KINGSMILLS  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
FOR YEAR ENDING 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER, 1958

Ministers :

REV. JAMES GRAHAM, B.A.  
REV. D. H. THOMPSON, (Stated Supply).

Elders :— W. King, Acheson Elliott (Clerk)

Committee :— R. N. Harpur, R. Doran, T. King, R. F. Harrison, H. Ross, James Flanagan, James King, Thomas McCormick, William Watson, D. McCullough, James Freeburne, K. Elliott

Church Officer :— Danny Wallace, Rathcarbery

Stipend Collector :— Thomas King, Mountnorris

Treasurer of Zenana Mission :—

Agent "Women's Work" :— Miss Mary King

Secretary of Orphan Society :— Rev. D. H. Thompson

Secretary I.B.R.A. :— Miss Marlene Patton

Superintendent S.S. :— Acheson Elliott

Congregational Treasurer :— Thomas McCormick

F.W.O. Treasurers :— James Freeburne and William Watson

General Secretary :—

Agent for Presbyterian Herald :— Miss R. Elliott

KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Minister : REV. R. TOPPING, M.A. (Stated Supply) 1968

Elders : Messrs. Acheson Elliott (Clerk), William Watson, Thomas McCormick, Harry Ross, Thomas Moffatt, Robert Wallace.

Committee : Messrs. William A. King (Carrowmannon), Secretary William King (Lurgana), John King (Lurgana), Roy Harpur, Noel Crozier, Winston McCormick, James McMullen, D. McMullan, Harold Patterson, James Flanagan, D. McCullagh, R. Doran

General Secretary : Mr. William A. King (Carrowmannon)

Congregational Treasurer : Mr. Thomas McCormick

Superintendent S.S. : Mr. James McMullen

F.W.O. Treasurer : Mr. William Watson

Stipend Collector : Mr. William King (Lurgana)

Secretary Orphan Society : Miss Vera King

Orphan Society Collectors : Miss Vera King, Miss Margaret E. Lockhart, Miss Eileen Andrews

Agent "Presbyterian Herald" : Miss R. Elliott

Agent "Woman's Work" : Miss Vera King

Church Officer : Mr. Danny Wallace (Rathcarbery)

## KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1978

Minister — Rev. JAMES THOMPSON, B.A., B.D.

Kirk Session — Messrs. Thomas McCormick (Clerk), William Watson, Harry Ross, Thomas Moffatt

Committee — Messrs. William A. King (Carrownannon), William King (Lurgana), John King (Lurgana), Roy Harpur, Noel Crozier, David McMullan, Harold Patterson, Wesley McCormick, Bertie Edgar, Bertie Flanagan, John Gibbons

General Secretary — William A. King

Congregational Treasurer — Mr. Thomas McCormick

Pew Organisers — Roy Harpur, W. King (Lurgana)

W.F.O. Treasurers — Messrs. W. Watson, John King, Bertie Edgar

Stipend Collector — Mr. William King (Lurgana)

Secretary Orphan Society — Mrs. S. Herron

Orphan Society Collectors — Mrs. S. Herron, Mrs. S. McMullan

Organist — Miss Helen Ross

Agent 'Presbyterian Herald' — Mrs. W. A. King

Agent 'Woman's Work' — Miss Mary Elliott

Church Officer — Mr. Danny Wallace (Rathcarbery)

## KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 1986

Minister — Rev. F. J. GIBSON, Tel : Jerretspass 247

Kirk Session : Messrs. Harry Ross (Clerk), Thomas McCormick, William Watson (decd.), John Gibbons, Roy Harpur, David McMullan

Committee : Messrs. William A. King (Carrownannon), William King (Lurgana), John King (Lurgana), Harold Patterson, Wesley McCormick, Bertie Flanagan, Raymond McCormick, Derek Lockhart, Tom Patterson,

Jim Henning, Mervyn Wright

Secretary : Wesley McCormick

Treasurer : John King

W.F.O. Treasurers : Committee Members in turn

Stipend Collector : William King (Lurgana)

Secretary, Orphan Society : Mrs. S. Herron

Orphan Society Collectors : Mrs. S. Herron, Mrs. H. Patterson

Organists : Mrs. R. Harpur, Mrs. J. King, Mrs. T. Patterson, Miss N. King, Miss P. Cartmill

Agent 'Presbyterian Herald' and 'Christian Irishman' : Mrs. W. A. King

Agent 'Woman's Work' : Mrs. J. Gibbons

Agent 'Scripture Union Bible Notes' : Mrs. C. Shields

P.W.A. Treasurer : Mrs. D. McMullan

Church Officer : Mr. Danny Wallace, Rathcarbery

## CHURCH COMMITTEE 1987



*Back row (left to right) — John Gibbons, Wm. King (Carrowmannon), Tom Patterson, Wm. King (Lurgana), Harold Patterson. Middle row (left to right) — Roy Harpur, Derek Lockhart, Raymond McCormick, Bertie Flanagan, Jim Henning, Mervyn Wright. Front row (left to right) — David McMullan, Thomas McCormick, Harry Ross, Rev. Gibson, Wesley McCormick, John King (Lurgana).*

### Magazine Distribution in the Church

As far back as one hundred years ago, magazines were being distributed within the Church. The "Missionary Herald" was the most widely circulated, with around thirty families receiving it.

Since the 1950's there has been the opportunity to buy the "Presbyterian Herald" and "Womans' Work".

When the Rev. Patterson became the minister, he encouraged the people to take copies of the "Christian Irishman" the magazine of the Irish Mission. After a series of sermons on the importance of Bible reading, he also introduced the congregation to the "Scripture Union Bible Notes". For the first year these were given free to each member of the Sunday School. Since then, those who want to use them can order them through the church but, unfortunately, only a small number take this opportunity.

### The Presbyterian Orphan Society

This society came into operation in 1866, probably as a result of the "59 Revival", when men and women's hearts were touched and they saw the great social, as well as spiritual need, around them. In its early years, it provided for around 3,000 orphan or fatherless children annually. In the first one hundred years of its existence more than 35,000 orphans were cared for.

Our church has faithfully contributed to this society throughout the years and continues to do so. The current collectors are Mrs. S. Herron and Mrs. H. Patterson.

## CHAPTER 16

# CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

A Church must try to cater for the spiritual needs of all who attend it. As a result, Kingsmills, like most other Presbyterian Churches, has a number of organisations and meetings which operate on a regular basis during the year.

These are detailed below though not in any particular order.

### THE MIDWEEK MEETING

This came into being in October 1979 during the ministry of Rev. T. V. Patterson and its aim was to provide the congregation of both Kingsmills and Jerretspass with a period of time each week when they could meet together for Bible Study and Prayer. It has always had a weekly attendance of between thirty and forty people from both congregations. The meetings are held for one month in one church and the following month in the other church.

From time to time there are speakers usually with a missionary background. Most of the time, however, is spent in detailed study of a particular book or topic within the Bible when a lot of preparation is put into the work by the Minister.

In January 1983, the Midweek group sponsored a little Bolivian boy under the Tear Fund Scheme. He is called Juan Jose Escalera and he was born on the 4th March 1974. When this sponsorship



*Juan Jose Escalera or "John"*

began the midweek group were to send £10 per month to Tear Fund, but this has gone up to £13. Juan or 'John' as we call him writes from time to time and lets us know something of his progress while someone from the church group replies.

Apart from supporting John the extra money which is given (usually around £200) goes to missionaries and missionary organisations.

### THE YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

This was formed in the Autumn of 1973 under the guidance of Rev. R. Birney, Downshire Road Presbyterian Church; who on coming to Newry had tried to encourage all the local churches to get involved in the Newry Presbytery Youth Movement.

An open meeting was held in the old school house to see how many of the congregation would be interested in youth work. Dr. Topping chaired the meeting and Mr. Birney explained the objects of Youth Fellowships and Youth Clubs. A committee was then elected to take up office in January 1974 and these are the names of that first committee :- Sandra Freeburn, Elizabeth Harpur, Anna Andrews, Mary Elliott, Edgar Patterson and John Gibbons.

Meetings were to be held on a Sunday evening. Attendance was good and as time went by, many of the young people grew in the Christian Faith.

In 1978 the Fellowship held its first sponsored event — a ten mile walk in Gosford forest park. Some parents also took part and altogether £300 was raised. This was used to buy chairs for the new Church Hall. Since that event, thousands of pounds have been raised by the Youth Fellowship and many missionaries have benefitted as a result.

When Mr. Patterson came to Kingsmills he had a great desire to teach the young people from the Word of God. Many were built up in their faith through the monthly Bible studies. As numbers grew it was decided to have two Youth Fellowships — a junior and a senior one; the junior one catering for the 9-12 year olds, meeting in the afternoon and the senior one for the teenagers meeting in the evenings. Both meetings were to be held fortnightly.

With the introduction of Youth Reach, Mr. Patterson started a series of training sessions involving five local churches (Markethill, 2nd Newtownhamilton, Mountnorris/Tullyallen, Cremore/Tyrone's Ditches and Jerretspass/Kingsmills). A desire grew among this group of young people to spread the Gospel and a year's outreach programme was planned. This still continues. A prayer meeting was also formed, meeting each month to plan and pray for each outreach event. This certainly brought about a great spirit of unity among the Christian young people and has had a great influence on many of the youth in these churches.

Under the guidance of Mr. Patterson, the Kingsmills Youth Fellowship started the annual visit of carol singing to the senior citizens. They were also responsible for organising the Watchnight Service at the end of the Old Year and the annual Youth Service in May.

About five years ago, a desire to teach the younger members became evident and with help from Mr. Mervyn Moffett, local C.E.F. director and some older members of the congregation, a Holiday Bible Club got underway. This continues to be held each year.

The Youth Fellowship has certainly been of immense spiritual value to the young people and, after fourteen years in operation, we can see the help it has been in building up the whole congregation.

The juniors still meet on alternate Sundays at 3 p.m. under the leadership of Miss Eileen Milne and Mrs. Heather Cartmill with an average attendance of twenty. The seniors meet at 7 p.m. on the same evening under the leadership of Rev. Gibson, Yvonne Hamilton, Carol Herron and Joanna Harpur. There are at present about twenty-five members.

#### KINGSMILLS HOLIDAY BIBLE CLUB, JULY 1987





*Kingsmills Youth Fellowship, 1981 pictured on the occasion of the presentation of a banner to the fellowship by Mr. D. Greer (Foundation Ministries). The banner was designed by Brian King. Back row (left to right) — Richard Gibbons, David Greer, Brian Andrews, Robert Wallace, Andrew Gibbons, Dereck Lockhart, Rev. T. V. Patterson. Middle row (left to right) — Hilary Lockhart, Helen Gibbons, Roslyn Cartmill, Yvonne Cartmill, Valerie Andrews, Pauline Hamilton, Mary Shields (Elliott). Front row (left to right) — Andrea Freeburn, Shirley King, Pamela Cartmill, Noreen King, David Bradley, Paul Freeburn, Andrew Harper, Richard Bradley.*

## JERRETTSPASS AND KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

This organisation came into being during the ministry of Rev. and Mrs. J. Thompson. It was thought that it would be a good idea to bring together the ladies of Kingsmills and Jerrettspass once a month under the umbrella of the P.W.A. So a branch was formed in October 1978. The first office bearers elected were as follows :-

Secretary	— Miss Dorothy Greenaway
Treasurer	— Mrs. H. Patterson
Committee	— Mrs. J. Moody, Mrs. B. Edgar

Meetings were to be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month the venue alternating between Kingsmills and Jerrettspass. In 1978 there were fifty one members and numbers have remained fairly steady over the years.

When Mrs. Thompson left at the end of a year, Mrs. Patterson became President and she worked very hard in this capacity until she and her husband went to Co. Antrim in November 1985.

The meetings are of a spiritual nature with many of the speakers involved in missionary work either at home or abroad. The fact that there is a P.W.A. in our church gives opportunity to support these people both financially and in prayer. Since the inception of this organisation almost £4000 has been collected from the



*Group of P.W.A. members pictured at the Giant's Causeway on their annual outing in June 1985. Sitting on the extreme right is Mrs. Patterson, wife of Rev. T. V. Patterson.*

individual members' mission boxes. Last year the amount collected was £509.

The current office bearers for the year 1986/87 are as follows :-

Secretary — Mrs. W. Doran  
Treasurer — Mrs. B. Marks  
Committee — Mrs. Forsythe, Mrs. W. McCormick

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

It is not known exactly when a Sabbath School was first organised in Kingsmills but some move had been made in the 1850's to bring the young people together to learn God's word. The Presbytery visitation of 1862 revealed that there were two Sabbath Schools held but only during the summer months. There were between thirty and forty children attending and one of the teachers was Mr. Henry's son. The Presbytery were not very happy with the way the Sabbath School was organised and they recommended that a big effort be made to bring it into a more efficient and flourishing condition.

A further visitation in 1868 showed that despite the fact that another Sabbath School had been started making a total of three and there were now ten teachers, the numbers attending had still not risen. In the 1870's, however, things improved greatly so that by 1880 there were now five Sabbath Schools with twenty one teachers and two hundred pupils. Mr. and Mrs. Meeke played a big part in achieving this and they both taught in the Sabbath School at Kingsmills. It was around this time that Robert Harpur, J.P. Divernagh House, was appointed as Sunday School Superintendent. He remained in that position for many years. His



brother William from Lisadian House also worked hard as a Sunday School teacher for a number of years and when he died in 1903 the young men of the congregation erected a tablet to his memory.

On the death of Robert Harpur, Thomas Elliott from Rathcarbery became the Superintendent. He resigned due to poor health in 1922 and he died in 1928. During Mr. Meeke's time the Sunday School was in a very healthy state. As we have seen on page 89 there were four different Sunday Schools connected with the church for some years around the turn of the century and at this time a Bible Class was also introduced. A Presbytery visitation in 1899 congratulated the congregation on taking a special interest in the young.

After the war years with the decrease in the number of families connected with the church, numbers in the Sunday School dropped dramatically and by 1925 there were only sixty pupils. Mr. Acheson Elliott from Drumherriff became Superintendent in 1922 and he held this position until his retirement in 1964. Up until about twenty years ago the examination was held at the end of

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS 1987



Back row (left to right) — Mr. J. Gibbons, Mrs. H. Ross, Miss J. Lundy, Mrs. R. Harpur, Mr. J. King. Front row — Mrs. R. Hamilton, Miss O. McCormick, Miss N. King, Mrs. A. Chambers, Miss E. Watson. (Inset, Miss S. Freeburn, Mrs. C. Shields).

October and then the Sunday School closed down for the winter months. This idea has since been reversed to accommodate the number of families now taking summer holidays. The examination is held in May and the holidays are similar to day school summer holidays.

Mr. J. McMullen was Superintendent from 1964 - 1970. Since then the post has not been officially filled though Mr. J. Gibbons plays a major part in the running of the Sunday School. Numbers have increased steadily since the 1950's and with the building of the Church Hall there is now accommodation for both a primary and a senior Sunday School. For the last twenty five years, up until June 1987, Miss Edith Watson was in charge of the primary group. On her retirement she was presented with a table lamp.

Over the years there has been a good attendance at the annual examinations and many young people have been called to the Conference for prizes.

### THE CHOIR

Whether or not music should be used in church services was always a big question from the mid nineteenth century onwards. In 1868 a question came before the General Assembly in connection with the use of a harmonium in Enniskillen Church. The subject of music within the church was brought up at every General Assembly for the next eighteen years when it was decided to ban discussion on the topic for five years. In the meantime it was hoped to induce all congregations using instruments to give them up. This did not happen and by 1892 the Assembly withdrew its opposition to instruments.

Kingsmills was very conservative in its views to music in the church and an organ was not introduced into public worship until 1920 when a vote was held on the issue. A big majority were in favour and an organ was purchased.

Prior to this the singing was raised by a precentor. Samuel and Robert McComb from Greyhilla acted in this capacity in the 1860's. In 1894 a music teacher was engaged to instruct young people in the congregation in the singing of sacred music. A Mr. Robert Burns from Newtownhamilton was to come once a week for three months in the summer of that year and his total fee was to be £4. He was also to lead the choir for as long as he could and for that duty he was to be paid five shillings per Sabbath. The congregation were asked to give a penny instead of a half-penny to the Sabbath collection in order to meet the expenses.

Mr. Burns must have been a very busy man for as well as his commitments in Kingsmills, he played in Tullyallen Brass Band. He also walked from Newtownhamilton to Drumhoney to teach Drumhoney Flute Band and he was responsible for the training of Ballygorman and Tullyhappy Bands as well.

Master Hunter was precentor for a number of years up until the organ was introduced. In 1916 his salary was increased from £4 to £10. Before he came John Boardman from Cavanakill did this job. The choir around the outbreak of war consisted of the following :- John Boardman and Martin Andrews (bass); J. J. Andrews, William Sinclair, Bob Harrison and Master Hunter (tenor); Selina Elliott, Sarah Jane Elliott, Annie Harrison and Jennie Harrison (sopranos).

The first organist to play in the actual church was Mrs. Hunter. This was in 1922. Prior to that Mrs. Meeke would have played an instrument in the school room but that was all. There was a great deal of ill feeling when the organ was first used. Some families sat down and refused to sing.

The congregation had always sang psalms and the introduction of paraphrases and hymns was another problem. When a paraphrase was first announced one member of the congregation from Tullyhappy got up and walked out. Whether he came back the next Sunday or not we don't know. Some others were dissatisfied as well, believing that the paraphrases and hymns were not the inspired word of God. However with time the opposition waned.

Up until 1920 the choir stood in front of the pulpit and faced the congregation when singing but the choir seats were taken away when the church was renovated and they were moved to the side of the pulpit.



*Miss Minnie Patton — the oldest surviving organist in the congregation, who now resides in Markethill.*

The second organist was Mrs. Graham and then Miss Minnie Patton played for fifteen years. In her time there were about twenty adults in the choir — no very young people and they practised regularly. She remembers well the majority of those who sang under her direction at that time — Bob Harrison, Tom McKnight, D. S. Elliott, Martin Andrews and Acheson Elliott all sang bass. William Elliott, Leslie Crozier and Billy Doran sang tenor. Susan Freeburn and Ellen McKnight sang alto and the sopranos included Doreen and Sadie Moffett and Val Doran.

Following Miss Patton the organists included Miss Sadie Moffett, Miss Beth Elliott, Mrs. Thompson, Miss Lorna Ross, Mrs. K. Elliott, Mrs. Topping and Miss Helen Ross.

In 1975 a new electric organ was purchased at a cost of £325. The choir continues to operate in church and lead the singing. In recent years a number of organists have been willing to give their services in a voluntary capacity Sunday by Sunday. These include Mrs. Tom Patterson, Mrs. John King, Mrs. Roy Harpur, Miss Noreen King and Miss Pamela Cartmill, and every encouragement is given to younger members of the church to exercise their talents in this direction.

### CHOIR AND ORGANISTS 1987



*Back row (left to right) — Miss Helen Gibbons, Mrs. T. Patterson, Mr. J. Gibbons, Mrs. R. Harpur, Miss Joanna Harpur. Front row (left to right) — Mr. S. Wallace, Miss Olive McCormick, Miss Pamela Cartmill, Miss Noreen King, Mr. M. Wright.*

### THE BADMINTON CLUB

Kingsmills Badminton Club was formed in 1978. The first committee meeting was held on 13 November 1978, when a committee, consisting of eleven members, were elected.

Chairman	— Earl Cartmill
Treasurer	— Elizabeth McCormick
Secretary	— Daphne King
Committee	: Derek Lockhart, Jim Freeburn, Glenda Cartmill, Elizabeth Harpur, Carol Patterson, Margaret King, Pauline Boyd and Tom Murphy.

Permission was obtained from the Church Committee to hold the Club on Monday and Wednesday nights, with the Club remaining open for one night, Wednesday, during the summer months. The ladies also met on Wednesday mornings.

A Junior Club was also formed that year, for children between the ages of 7-12 years and this is held on Friday nights — with a senior club member to supervise it. It begins at 7 p.m. and finishes at 9.30 p.m.

Mr. Jackie Ross attended on several occasions to coach the members and when a sufficient level of skill and knowledge of the game was obtained, a team was formed to play in friendly matches between a number of local clubs which included Jerrettspass, St. Mary's Newry, Markethill, Loughbrickland and Kilkeel.

The Junior Club has also played in a number of friendly matches against the fellow junior clubs of Redrock, Warrenpoint, Markethill and Jerrettspass.

In September 1980, the Committee decided that the Club had reached a standard suitable for entrance into the Ballyward and District Badminton League. Two teams were entered — a 'B' and 'C' team. The 'B' team did exceptionally well in its first year, to finish as runners-up to the winning team of Downshire Road, losing the league by only one point.

The Club also held a Mixed Doubles Tournament which included the Jerrettspass Club members. Anne Henning and Ronnie Cromwell were the winners of the 'B' Section, while Anne Freeburn and William Elliott won the 'C' Section. The winning pair of the Junior Tournament was Helen Cartmill and Brian King.

A Dinner was also organised by the Club that year and took place on the night of 25 March 1983 in the Church Hall. Entertainment was provided by the 'Wayside Mimers'.

In 1985, the 'A' team won the Knockout Cup and was presented with the McBurney Shield on the night of the District Leagues Annual Dinner. This was the first award ever won by the Club since its opening. The following year turned out to be even more rewarding for the Club when the 'A' team retained the 'Shield' for the second successive year. The 'C' team reached the final of their section's Knockout Cup, but the competition was declared null and void. The mixed Doubles Tournament was won by David Andrews and Alison Toombs, who at that time played for the 'A' team as the second mixed pair.

The Club began with an original membership of forty-five adults and nineteen children, sadly, however over the years the membership of the club has declined and now there is less than half of the original membership.



*The Kingsmills Badminton Team, Ann Henning, Elizabeth McCormack, Ann Chambers and Valerie Andrews. Ronnie Cromwell, Wm. Elliott, Earl Cartmill and David Andrews. April 1985 — after having won the McBurney Shield for the first time.*



*Kingsmills Badminton Club's second team. Front row, left to right, D. King, M. King, V. King, A. Cromwell. Back row, J. Henning, P. Freeburn, A. Freeburn, D. Bradley and W. Cartmill, pictured in April 1986.*

## THE YOUTH CLUB

Kingsmills Youth Club was formed in 1985 and commenced in April of that year. The idea originated from members of the Youth Fellowship who wanted something different to do on a Saturday night and so under the guidance of the Rev. Patterson and John King enquiries were made as to the best way it could be formed.

The Youth Club is registered with the Southern Education and Library Board who provide grant aid and help for Youth Clubs on the condition that the Youth Club is open to all young people in the community. The grant aid includes two hundred miles of free travel on an SELB bus to wherever the Youth Club wish, a divisional Youth Bus for short trips within the Newry area, and a pool of equipment which can be taken out for a maximum of three months after which it can be bought or returned. Grant aid is also provided for heating and lighting and to pay qualified leaders if there are any. Kingsmills Youth Club does not have any leaders as such but the Minister acts as Chairman and parents volunteer to supervise. Members of the Youth Club are voted in as office bearers and committee members. The first supervisors included : Gerald Cartmill, Raymond McCormick, Wesley McCormick, Ronnie Cromwell, Bertie Freeburn, Jim Freeburn, Roy Harpur, Anne Henning, Jim Henning, Evelyn Milne, Lorraine Scott and Kenneth Wallace. The first office bearers and committee members were : Paul Freeburn (Treasurer), Carole Herron (Secretary), Brian Andrews, Valerie Andrews, Mary Elliott, Andrew Gibbons, Richard Gibbons, Yvonne Hamilton, Andrew Harpur, Noreen King and Derek Lockhart.

The Club commenced with twenty five members and now has over thirty four. The Youth Club meets from September until May and is held on alternate Saturday evenings, commencing at 7.30 p.m. until 10.00 p.m. A membership fee is paid at the beginning of each year, £1 for those not working and £2 for those who are working. The members partake in various activities which include snooker, table tennis, table football and various ball games. In the clear evenings the church car park is used for playing football. The Youth Club also arranges to have guest speakers and use the free transport provided to visit different leisure centres and to go on a summer outing to a local historic or tourist attraction. The Rev. F. Gibson introduced the idea of an epilogue which includes a bible reading, a short explanation and a prayer which takes up about fifteen minutes during the evenings activities.

KINGSMILLS YOUTH CLUB SEPTEMBER 1987



*Back row (left to right) — Darren McCormick, William Moffett, George King, Alan King, Derek Herron. Middle row (left to right) — Keith Paiton, Gareth Wallace, James King, Jim Herron, Colin McCormick, Paul King, Neil Cromwell. Front row (left to right) — Linda King, Linda Wallace, Charlotte Wright, Carole Herron.*

## CHAPTER 17

### IN THE SERVICE OF THE LORD

This Chapter deals with those who grew up in our Church and who answered God's call to go into full time service for Him.

The following people entered the ministry of the Presbyterian Church :-

Five Patterson brothers, three of whom served in Ireland — David, James and John from Cavanakill

Samuel Paul from Lisadian

William Patton from Carrickananny

William Elliott from Drumherriff

Robert J. Patterson from Cavanakill

Hugh C. Meeke from the Manse

John Patterson from Cavanakill

During this century no-one from Kingsmills has entered the ministry of the Presbyterian Church but two people who were born into the congregation have gone into full time service for the Lord — Roy Harrison and Margaret Elliott.

As can be seen the name 'Patterson' is well represented in the above list and because of this we will deal in some detail with that particular family within the congregation.

#### The Patterson Family

In the nineteenth century 'Patterson' was one of the most common surnames in this area. It is believed that during the Plantation of Ulster in the 17th Century, seven brothers of that name left their home in Ayrshire, Scotland and settled in this district.

Two hundred years later, Pattersons could be found in many of the townlands between Belleek and Mountnorris. Looking through church records in the district we see that they resided in Drumnahunshin, Drummrow, Cavanakill, Lurgana, Lisdrumchor, Drumherriff, Drumnahoney, Lisadian, Carrickgalloghy, Outlacken and Ballintemple. Some of them were connected with the Church of Ireland in Ballymoyer and Belleek but the vast majority of them were Presbyterians. Prior to the building of Kingsmills these families were attached to Mountnorris Church at Tullyallen. This was quite a distance and at one stage they had seriously considered building a Church in the Lurgana/Cavanakill area.

When Kingsmills was built, the Patterson name was very strong in the congregation. The earliest records in 1865 show that there were thirty Pattersons on the Communicant's Roll, by far the most common name. One branch of the family lived in Drumnahunshin where they had a good size of farm and a flax mill. They were known as "Patterson's of the Mill" and their homestead, built in the 1820's now stands in the Ulster Folk Museum at Cultra. It was given to the Museum by Mrs. Gay Patterson Kocmich a daughter of David Patterson who left this area for the U.S. at the beginning of the century. His sister Maggie continued to live in the house until the 1960's. Their father, John and his father, William had farmed there all through the nineteenth century. The house was built around 1800 and it was typical of a fairly well-to-do-farm house at the time. It originally consisted of two rooms under a thatched roof. Over the years, as the family prospered the house was remodelled and expanded to include a parlour and dining room on the ground floor and bedrooms upstairs.

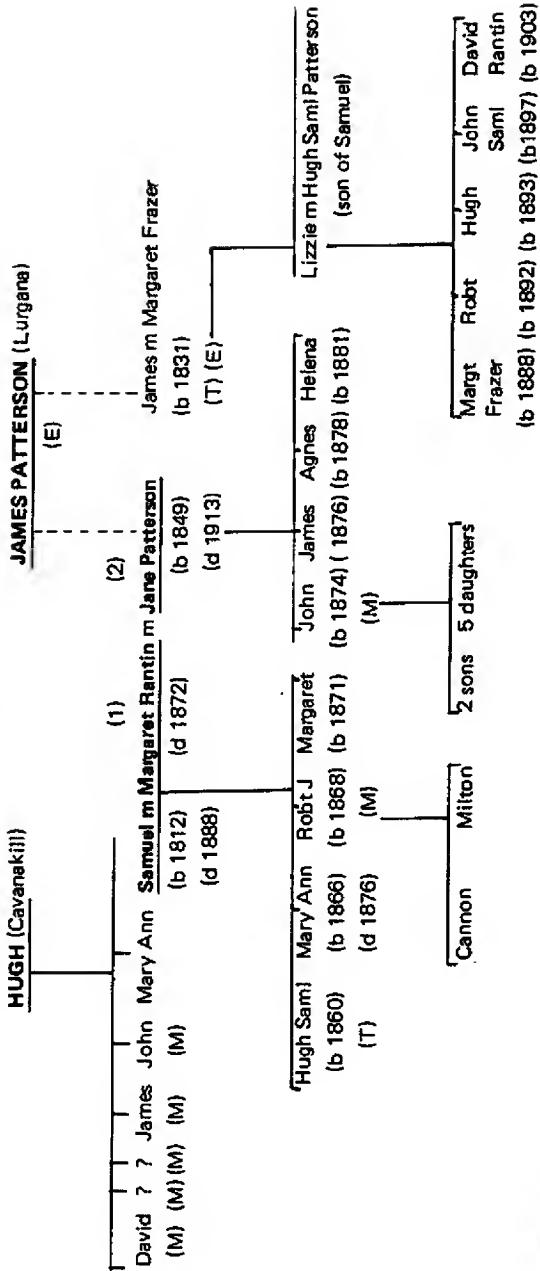


*The Patterson homestead at Drumnahunshin now one of the most recent attractions at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.*

The cart shed was connected directly into the parlour by a door and the first outhouses were probably a byre and stable on the other side of the road. Again these were thatched in 1830. Other outhouses were added towards the turn of the century namely a dairy, a poultry house and a store for fuel and implements.

A walk around this house in the Folk Museum gives us a feel of what life was like for these early members of Kingsmills.

## THE BALLYMOYER PATTERNS



[M] - MINISTER

T) — TRUSTEE

E - ELDER

## The Ballymoyer Pattersons

Another branch of the Patterson family who lived in Cavanakill produced seven Presbyterian ministers, two church elders and a church trustee in just three generations. This family were distinguished by a capacity for intellectual attainment. Hugh Patterson farmed here around 1800 and was probably one of the founder members of Kingsmills. He married and had a large family. Five of his sons became Presbyterian ministers but unfortunately we can only trace the three who remained in this country. It is thought that the other two may have gone to South Africa. Their Christian names are not known by their descendants. The three who contributed to the growth of the Church in this country were David, James and John. An account of their individual ministries is given below.

### Rev. David Patterson

He was born in 1810 and he studied for the ministry in Assembly College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Armagh Seceders Presbytery in 1838. The following year, on the 26th March he began what was to be his first and only charge as the minister of the Secession Church in Saintfield, Co. Down (now Saintfield Presbyterian).

He had a difficult task in front of him for he was succeeding one of the most famous of the Secession ministers, Rev. Walter Moffat — a man with a great missionary spirit and referred to, in a book by Dr. John T. Carson as “the McCheyne of the Irish Seceders”.

As well as this, Mr. Patterson ran into trouble in the second year of his ministry when he decided to bring his church into the union of the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod. His congregation strongly disapproved and threatened to bring his ministry to an abrupt conclusion. However, he weathered the storm and from this point onwards the work within the church seemed to flourish.

In 1842, with increased attendance, it was found necessary to erect an additional gallery and a special service was held to eliminate a debt. The following year Mr. Patterson travelled to Scotland to lay the foundation stone of the Free Church in Dalkeith.

Throughout his ministry he took a keen interest in the young people of the Sunday School and as a mark of their appreciation they presented him with a fine chair bearing the brass inscription —

*“Presented to Rev. D. Patterson of Saintfield by the  
young men of the Sabbath School”.*

One hundred and fifty years later, this chair is still treasured by his brother's descendants living in Co. Monaghan.

Mr. Patterson died on 9th September 1847 aged only thirty seven. The official history of Second Saintfield Church states that he was "a successful Minister of Jesus Christ in that place until his homecall".

He was also referred to as a noted Hebrew scholar.

His body was brought home to be buried in the family plot at Kingsmills, which is just to the right of the Church door.



*The Patterson family plot.*

#### Rev. James Patterson

He was born in 1818 and began studying for the ministry in 1840, as a student of the Down Presbytery. It is thought that he went to live with his brother in Saintfield where he completed his early education. In 1842 he was accepted under the care of the Newry Presbytery and licensed by them in 1847. Two years later, the Congregation of Bray in the Presbytery of Dublin issued him with a unanimous call and he was ordained there on the 24th April 1849. In the same year he married Miss Helena Hamilton Reid, a member of the Bray congregation whose father was a director of the prestigious Dublin store, "Switzers".

The Bray Church had been set up as a result of a report by the Irish Evangelical Society in 1816 which stated that "a field of Gospel labourers has been opened up in Bray". Students for the ministry used to come weekly to conduct services in the Court House. In 1817 a Church was built, but despite an encouraging start numbers declined and there were only six families connected with the Church around 1840.

In 1849 a special visitation was necessary to decide whether or not to continue the work. The Committee undertook to raise £21 annually and twenty one people signed the call to Mr. Patterson (twelve Presbyterians and nine from other denominations). The average attendance at public worship was twenty five and at his first communion service eight people partook. However numbers were to increase greatly under his ministry. This was partly due to the fact that Bray was becoming a popular seaside resort. As well as this there was a steady influx of Scottish families around the village of Kilpedder, about ten miles away. Mr. Patterson visited them once a fortnight and conducted worship to around sixty people.

Under his able ministry a new Church was built in Quinsboro Road in 1858, followed later by a manse.

In those days, singing in the Presbyterian Church was unaccompanied and any form of musical instrument was not allowed in the building by order of the General Assembly. Despite this ruling the Bray congregation acquired a harmonium and when the visitation of Presbytery came along in 1878 they were most displeased at this innovation. "We regret that the minister and his people have introduced this harmonium into public worship — as they thought for the good of the congregation — but would urge them to make another effort to comply with the instructions of the General Assembly". Despite this the congregation were congratulated on the healthy state of Presbyterianism in Bray, the Church now having sixty families and seventy five communicants. Mr. Patterson resigned in 1881, after labouring faithfully for thirty years in Bray. During his long ministry the congregation had increased from twenty one people to over sixty families and Presbyterianism was firmly established in that part of Co. Wicklow.

The "Bray Man" as his family called him, died in February 1886 and he was buried in the Churchyard in Quinsboro Road. The congregation later erected a tablet to his memory. It hangs on the south transept of the Church and reads :-

"To the memory of the Rev. James Patterson who, for 37 years laboured zealously and fruitfully as a pastor of this congregation. By his energy and perseverance he was enabled to erect this Church and the adjoining manse for the Glory of God and the good of his country. He died trusting in his Redeemer's righteousness on the 11th day of February 1886 in the 68th year of his age".

Mr. and Mrs. Patterson had no family but they played an important role in bringing up a nephew called Robert James. He became famous as "Catch My Pal" Patterson. (See page 233).

### **Rev. John Patterson**

He was a younger brother of David and James. He also studied for the ministry in Belfast and like his brother James he started off as a student under the care of the Presbytery of Down. In 1848 he was received into the Newry Presbytery, having presented them with a certificate of his standing as a student of the third year with the Down Presbytery.

In 1857 he was licensed by the Newry Presbytery and on 21st December 1852 he was ordained to the pastoral charge of 2nd Drumbanagher (Jerretspass). He worked with great zeal in this congregation for thirteen years but then private problems came to a head and his congregation accused him of intemperance. While this matter was being investigated by the Presbytery in the Autumn of 1867, he was put in Armagh Gaol for debt offences. He died there on the 9th February in the following year not quite fifty years of age.

These then were the three sons of Hugh Patterson about whom we were able to gather some information in church records. Another son called Samuel, born in 1812, stayed at home on the family farm at Cavanakill with his sister Mary Ann. In the 1850's he married Margaret Rantin and they had four children. Hugh Samuel, born in 1860 became one of the first group of Church trustees. He married Lizzie Patterson, a member of another very church orientated family. Her father and grandfather, both called James, served as elders in Kingsmills. They lived in the townland of Lurgana. Another son of Samuel's, Robert James, born in 1865 became a Presbyterian minister and a famous temperance worker. Samuel's wife died in 1872 and the following year he married Jane Patterson. There were four children in this family — John like his half brother became a minister and James served on the church committee for many years. They had two sisters Agnes and Helena. Their father Samuel took no prominent part in the affairs of the church. He died in 1888.

### **Rev. Robert James Patterson**

Robert was born on New Year's Day 1868 and little did his parents imagine the great work that their son would accomplish far away from the peace and quiet of the farm in Ballymoyer.

His mother died when he was only four years old and his Uncle and Aunt in Bray helped with his education in his teenage years. He lived with them during those years. In 1882 he was at home in Cavanakill and he attended the Communicants Classes in Church. His name appears on the Communicants Register for that year.

He completed his schooling and went on to Trinity College, Dublin where he had the distinction of having conferred upon him, on the same day, the degree of B.A. and LLB. He took his theological course at Assembly's College and Edinburgh.



Photo.  
ABERNETHY  
BELFAST.

*Rev. Robert J. Patterson, LL.B.,  
Founder of the Catch My Pal  
Protestant Total Abstinence Union.*

As a child, Robert's Aunt Helena, wife of the Bray minister had a tremendous influence on him and instilled in him a very caring attitude for others who were less well off. In 1912, he wrote a book entitled "Catch My Pal" and he dedicated it to her memory.<sup>(i)</sup>

*"..... who was a loving mother to me and who, by doing good, taught me, when a boy, the secret of good samaritanship".*

As a child Robert had wanted to be an African missionary. His hero was David Livingstone and the ambition to follow in Livingstone's footsteps remained with him through college days. While a member of the Student's Missionary Movement in New College, Edinburgh he dedicated himself to missionary work wherever God would call him.

He found it hard then to understand why, a few months later, God should call him to be minister of the Mall Presbyterian Church in Armagh, just eighteen miles from where he was born. Still he answered the call and commenced his preaching there in 1892 with as much energy for the job as he would have used in darkest Africa.

In the same year he married a daughter of Mr. George Wiltshire from Berkshire. He soon became the North of Ireland Secretary of the Religious Tract Society and he would ride up to sixty miles a day on his motor bicycle. It was while on such journeys that he encountered life in the raw in the towns and villages of Ulster.

In his book he says :-

*"I saw many tramps on life's highways and byways, men, women and children for whose souls no one seemed to care. I longed to seek and save them. I did not go out as a missionary to the tramps on the road, but I went out as a missionary to prevent men and women from becoming tramps. Drink is the chief cause of trampdom".*

His desire to work among these men grew greater and greater. One question kept coming before him — "How is it that after nineteen hundred years of Christian history, the Devil seems to have more power in the world today than Christ has?". This bothered him.

He got an idea for, what he later called, a "Catch My Pal" movement and it came from the Gospel of John.

"Our religion was started on Catch My Pal lines", he said. "Our Lord caught Andrew and Andrew caught Peter and brought him to Jesus. Then he caught Philip and Philip caught Nathanael and brought him to Jesus".

(i) This book is subtitled "A story of Good Samaritanship" and was published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1912. It is available on loan from the library service.

"And He must needs go through Samaria. Why?", says Robert Patterson, "Because there was a defiled woman coming to a well and he wanted to catch her for purity of life. When she was caught she went and caught her pals and brought them to Jesus. Catch My Palism wrought a revival in Sychar. I got my Catch My Palism from Jesus".

He put this idea, which God had implanted within him, to work on the thirteenth of July evening 1909. Going home to his manse in the main street of Armagh, he saw six men standing at a lamp post, around which it was the custom to talk and smoke. He stopped and talked to them about the evils of drink and asked them to consider signing the pledge. They were all to come together to his house on the Friday night. To his surprise, all six came and signed it and promised to bring another six drinking friends to the next meeting. This happened. Twelve became twenty five and at a public meeting in Gosford Place School on 30th July there were scenes of wild enthusiasm as Mr. Patterson addressed the meeting and over fifty more took the pledge. The meeting closed with everyone unitedly saying — "I will see this thing through".

As a result of this the Armagh Total Abstinence Union was formed. Numbers joining spread throughout the whole of the Armagh area and the name had to be changed to the Co. Armagh Total Abstinence Union. Then as it spread all over Ulster the name was changed to the Protestant Total Abstinence Union. Later on Mr. Patterson changed it to "Catch My Pal".

"Christianity is a fisherman's movement" he said. "Our Lord said to Peter — "From henceforth thou shalt catch men". "I took the word 'catch' from the lips of Jesus. This is a fisherman's movement within the Churches. For successful fishing we must put on our hook, the bait which will attract the fish we want to catch".

On the first Sunday in 1910, Mr. Patterson preached at a Church parade of the Lurgan branch of the movement. Eleven hundred men marched through the streets to the Church and it was said that a publican who usually took £50 a week, acknowledged that on the Friday after the parade, only one half crown (12½ pence) was taken over the counter.

130,000 men and women joined the movement during its first year in Ireland. Almost five hundred branches were formed in less than two years. The success of the movement was such that Mr. Patterson resigned as minister of the Mall Church in Armagh on 3rd August 1910. In that year he addressed the Synod of the Church of Ireland in Dublin, an unusual thing for a Presbyterian minister to do in those days.

The movement spread to the rest of Britain. In London, alone, he addressed thirty meetings where over 24,000 people attended. His missionary travellings took him into every Continent and every English speaking country in the world. Branches were

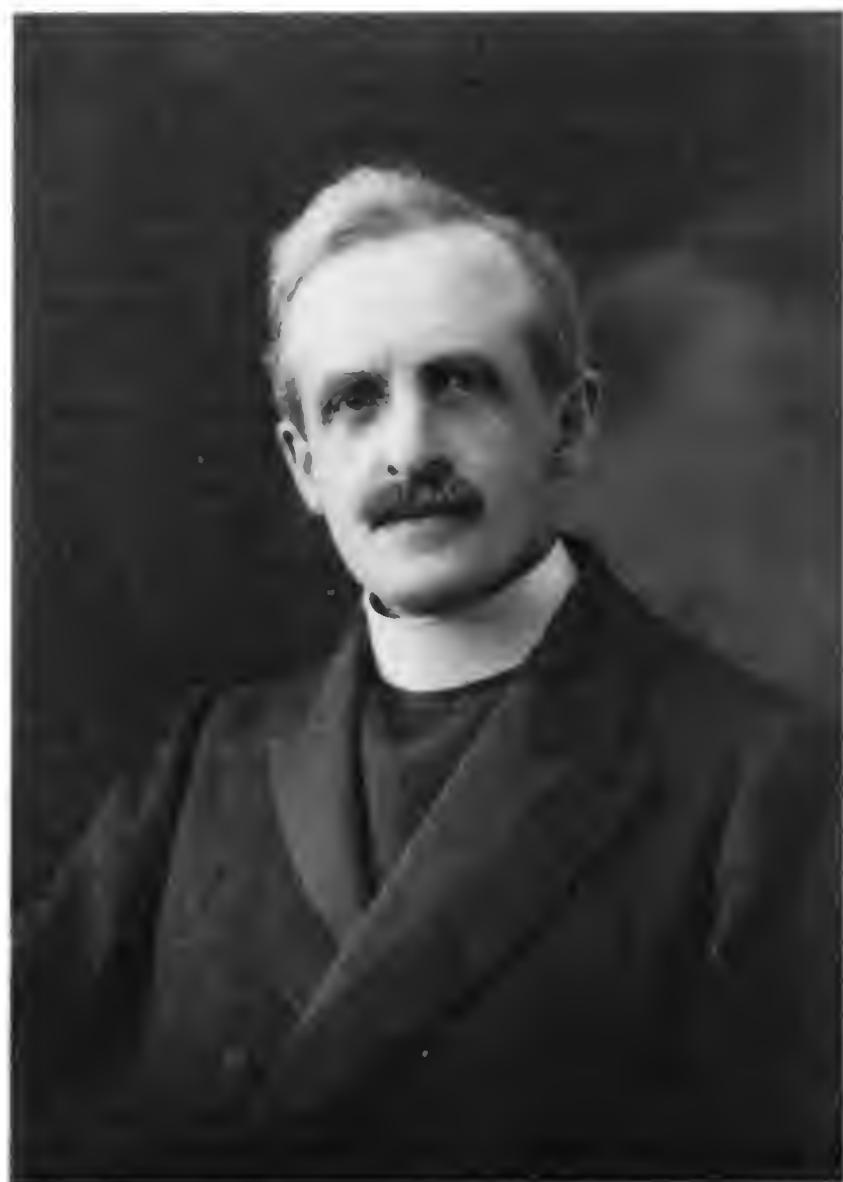
set up in Canada, U.S.A., South Africa, Australia, Jamaica, France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Holland, Denmark and Sweden. In September 1911 he addressed the International Congress of Alcoholism at the Hague in Holland. He was asked to do so again on two other occasions.

The work of the Catch My Pal Movement continued to thrive but by 1918 the strain of it all became too much for Robert Patterson. Due to exhaustion he had to give up the active part of the work. He returned to ministerial duties accepting a call to Crumlin Road Presbyterian Church in Belfast. There he laboured among the congregation and he also represented the Catch My Pal movement at various meetings. He had also time to concentrate on his artistic talents and during these years he was responsible for many of the illuminated addresses presented to retiring ministers of the Church. In 1928, while on a lecture tour of Australia, Mr. Patterson took ill and he had to return home early. He recovered but his wife died shortly afterwards. Despite all this and being given leave to retire, he continued to minister to the congregation. On 8th October 1930, after returning from taking the weekly prayer meeting he took ill and died within a few hours. He was survived by two sons — Cannon and Milton, the latter living for some years in the Cottage at Lisadian around 1960.

The "Catch My Pal Patterson" as he had become known, had lived a life devoted to doing God's work here on earth. He never became as famous as David Livingstone but he was where God wanted him to be. The words of Rev. T. M. Johnston, Convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Temperance in 1930 summed up Robert James Patterson in a few sentences. "Not only has the Irish Presbyterian Church lost one of her finest sons, but Ulster has lost one of her most eloquent speakers. All over the Empire, there are people who are a living testimony to his work, and there in Armagh one of the most vitalising movements in the temperance cause began. Had R. J. Patterson been a brewer or a distiller, he would have reached a large estate but since he was only a minister of the Gospel he had not any great financial resources; yet he would not have changed places with any brewer or distiller".

#### **Rev. John Patterson B.A.**

John was the eldest child in Samuel Patterson's second family. He was born in 1874 and he received his early education at Lurgana School under the teaching of Mr. Walter Patterson, the master. Following this he went to Newry Intermediate School and from there to one of Edinburgh's most famous schools — George Watsons. His Arts course was taken at Trinity College, Dublin and his Theological course at Assembly's College, Belfast. He was licensed by the Newry Presbytery in 1900 and for a time he acted as an assistant in Kilkeel before being called to the congregation of Scotstown in Co. Monaghan in 1902. In the same year he



*Rev. John Patterson B.A.*

married Miss Anna Lawson from Warrenpoint. He laboured in the Scotstown area for thirteen years and on October 12th, 1915 he was installed in the united charge of Loughmourne and Crieve in the Ballybay Presbytery. He was minister there for twenty years having to retire from active service at only sixty one years of age due to ill health. He had suffered for some time prior to this but had tried to struggle on. Four years later, in March 1939 he died and he was buried in the grounds of Second Ballybay Presbyterian Church. Many of the Kingsmills folk attended the funeral for they knew him quite well. He attended various functions at Kingsmills over the years and he was also a regular visitor at his home in Ballymoyer where his brother and sister lived.

During his ministry in Co. Monaghan, Mr. Patterson, like his brother Rev. R. J. Patterson, was deeply interested in temperance. He also had a great enthusiasm for anything mechanical and at one stage he invented a very useful flax pulling machine. Indeed he was a very gifted man in many ways. Speaking at the funeral service the minister of Corlea Church near Ballybay said that these gifts were "eminently suited to the work of the pulpit" and that Mr. Patterson used these gifts unsparingly as long as his health permitted.

"His was a nature kindly above the average. To the general public he endeared himself by his willing manner and his unfailing readiness to do a good turn to anyone in trouble. There must be many people in the districts surrounding this town who can testify to his sympathy and his little nameless unremembered acts of kindness and of love".

Mr. Patterson had seven children — two sons and five daughters. One of his sons, Samuel Lawson Patterson continued to live and farm on his father's property just outside Ballybay. He died some time ago but his son still carries on the work.

#### Rev. Samuel Paul

Samuel Paul was born around 1820 and it is likely that he was a member of a Paul family who lived in Lisadian. He grew up in the Church and became a student for the ministry early in 1840. He studied in Belfast and was licensed by the Newry Presbytery on 6th April 1847.

Soon after this he emigrated to the United States and in 1851 he began his ministry there under the Presbytery of Philadelphia. He was placed in charge of the Churches in Norristown and Conshohocken. By 1854 he had transferred to the Presbytery of Baltimore serving in the Bel-Air Presbyterian Church in Maryland. Prior to taking up this appointment he had travelled home to Ulster and had preached in some of the local churches. Apparently he suffered ill health for a number of years and he was only in Bel-Air for a short time. He was then without a Church until 1862 when he took over as the minister of Harmony Presbyterian,

in Chemung, Illinois. In 1864 he was again back on a visit to these parts and he preached in Kingsmills during the vacancy following the death of the Rev. Henry. He returned to Illinois and preached there until 1875 but there is no further record of his services within the Church after this date. It is thought that he may have retired early due to ill health. In 1899 he died in America and in his will he left a sum of money to the Kingsmills congregation. As a mark of gratitude Mr. Paul's name was included on a Memorial tablet erected in 1901 and bearing the names of two other contributors.

#### Rev. William Elliott M.A., D.D.

He was the youngest of a family of six, born on 24th May, 1857 to Robin and Martha Elliott (formerly Miss Acheson from Loughgilly). They lived in the townland of Drumherriff. At the time the Rev. Alexander Henry was Minister of the Church.

When William Elliott was seven years old, Rev. Meeke became the Minister. He took a great interest in the young people and he encouraged William's parents to send him to the Royal Academical Institute in Belfast. Before going to Belfast Mr. Meeke had already started to teach the young man the basics of Latin and Greek. He later encouraged him to enter the Ministry. This he did and after a course in the Old Queen's College, Belfast he obtained his Master of Arts Degree with first class honours. He then went on to Assembly's College and completed his studies at Edinburgh University. In 1879 he was licensed by the Newry Presbytery and ordained on the 21st October that year in Naas, Co. Kildare. This was a large pastorate and as well as preaching in the Church in Naas, William Elliott travelled to three mission stations in Straffin, Coolcarrigan and Newbridge. He was also responsible for the setting up of two schools — one in Naas and the other in Newbridge.

Shortly after commencing his ministry in Co. Kildare, Mr. Elliott married a local girl from Castlekeely. Her name was Anne Maxwell. They had three sons, one of whom became a minister in the United Free Church in Scotland. In 1907 he was installed in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. It had been one of the strongest country congregations in the South of Ireland until the potato famine forced mass emigration from the area. He set about building again the congregation in the West. During his ministry of almost thirty years in Ballinasloe he built up a great relationship with the congregation. He did a lot of visitation around the homes and took a great interest in the young people. Probably, as a result of the enthusiasm shown by Mr. Meeke for his own education, he worked in Ballinasloe, as he had previously done in Naas, to get schools built. One such was opened in Mount Pleasant Avenue in the town after many financial difficulties. The Whigham Hall was also built as a centre for the use of the Church and the whole town. Rev. James Weir Whigham had been sent to Ballinasloe



*Rev. Wm. Elliott B.A., D.D.*



IN MEMORY OF  
**REV. WILLIAM ELLIOTT, M.A., D.D.**  
BORN AT DRUMHERIFF 24th MAY 1857  
ORDAINED AT NAAS, CO. KILDARE, OCT. 1879  
INSTALLED IN BALLINASLOE, CO. GALWAY, JULY 1907  
AFTER AN ACTIVE MINISTRY OF 57 YEARS  
ENTERED INTO REST 3rd JUNE, 1938  
*A MAN GREATLY BELOVED*

*Memorial tablet erected to Rev. Wm. Elliott. It is on  
the West Wall to the left of the side door.*

just after the famine and had worked hard for many years to keep the congregation alive.

On 21st October 1936, William Elliott retired after fifty seven years service in the Church, all of which were spent in the South of Ireland. During his time there he never forgot the congregation where he grew up. He often visited in the area, especially with his own family. His four brothers and one sister all farmed in the Kingsmills area and still worshipped in the Church there. He also retained a great friendship with Mr. Meeke who had been at the ordination in Naas, and took part at his wedding a few years later.

When Mr. Meeke died in 1933, William Elliott paid him an eloquent tribute at the funeral service in Kingsmills. He spoke of their great friendship over the years and of the influence which Mr. Meeke had on him as a young boy.

In 1934 he came North again to be present at the Newry Presbytery Centenary Service.

After having retired from the Ministry he went to live in Belfast. In the Spring of 1930 he went to visit his sons who lived in Scotland. He passed away on the return journey to Ireland aboard the steamer in which he was making the crossing. His remains were brought back to Kingsmills and there was a large attendance of Clergy from various parts of Ireland. The funeral was conducted in the Church by Rev. James Graham, B.A., Kingsmills, Rev. T. Bole, B.A., Dublin and Rev. J. M. Lyle, M.A., India. The address was given by Very Rev. Dr. Hanna, Dublin and the Rev. Dr. Morrow, Clontarf officiated at the graveside.

He was laid to rest in the family plot near the Porch door, beside his parents and brothers. No mention is even made on the headstone to the fact that he was a minister. His wife died in 1950 and was buried beside him. Some years after his death a memorial tablet was erected in the Church to his memory. It was unveiled by his widow and the Very Rev. Dr. Hanna from Dublin dedicated it. Speaking in the Church Dr. Hanna said, "For his ministry I had, from the first, the warmest admiration. In a charge like Ballinasloe, the inspiration of numbers is lacking; the minister is sitting by a brook which "is drying up — and he can easily become discouraged and lose heart and grip. But with William Elliott this did not happen. He believed that God had sent him to Ballinasloe and he preached the Gospel with as much zest and care as if he were in the largest of our Churches".

"As a pastor William Elliott won the admiration of the whole Church. The faithfulness with which he discharged the duties of oversight and attention and hospitality to his widely scattered flock has never been surpassed".

"As a Christian gentlemen William Elliott won the esteem and indeed affection of the entire communities, mainly Roman Catholic,

among which he laboured, both in Co. Kildare and Co. Galway as was shown by the tributes sent to the Moderator of our Church by public bodies when Mr. Elliott died".

"It is fitting that the memorial should be here, the place of his birth, and in the Church of his baptism, and the home of his forebearers and people".

### Rev. Hugh Craig Meeke M.A.

Hugh Craig Meeke was the second son of the Rev. James Meeke and he was born at the Manse on 15th February 1872. He was called after his maternal grandfather, Hugh Craig.

His early education was received at Kingsmills. Later he attended a school in Belfast, before going on to Edinburgh where he gained a Master of Arts Degree. Following in his father's footsteps he returned to Belfast and studied at Assembly College.

On completion of his theological studies he was licensed by the Newry Presbytery and on 12th December 1899 he was installed in Ballylinney near Ballyclare. The installation service was attended by a number of people from the Kingsmills congregation and his father took part in the service. After five years there he resigned to take up an appointment as an army chaplain and in 1906 he married Miss Norah Coffey whose father was the Presbyterian Minister in Mullingar.

Mr. Meeke served with distinction throughout the First World War, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and being mentioned in despatches. In 1918 he was awarded the D.S.O. His wife also joined in the war effort nursing the troops. Her name appears with that of her husband in the War memorial window in Church.

When the War came to an end Mr. Meeke decided to remain in the army as a chaplain and he worked in this capacity until his retirement in 1926. He settled in Farnborough, Hampshire but wasn't content with the quiet life so he began working with the blind and he became known in the area as the "blind people's friend".

He died very suddenly on 8th February 1934 while walking on the golf links, just seven months after he had buried his father in Kingsmills.

### Mr. William Patton

William Patton deserves mention in this section even though he never lived to complete his studies for the ministry. He was born in 1849, the son of George and Eliza Patton of Carrickananny. When he was twenty years old he began studying to enter the Presbyterian Church but he had only completed a year when he was taken very ill. He died in July 1870, as a result of tuberculosis

and the following November his younger brother also died of the same complaint. A headstone at the rear of the Church marks their burial place.

### Mr. Roy Harrison

Roy was born on 19th July 1942, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Harrison who lived and farmed in Lurgana where Mr. David McMullan now resides. His grandfather, John, was an elder in Kingsmills for twenty years and he died in the same year as Roy was born.

The Harrison family moved from Lurgana in the late 1940's and settled just outside Portadown. They joined First Portadown Presbyterian Church. While at school, Roy was very good at languages and this was to prove useful to him later on. He became a Christian when he was eighteen years of age and some time later he felt called into full time service with Child Evangelism Fellowship. After training, he graduated from the European Bible Institute in France in September 1966 and in the same year he was married.

He and his wife, Ruth, who is also from N. Ireland, then studied for a year at C.E.F. in Michigan. Following this they had a 6 months practical training in Ohio.

From January 1968 to May 1974, Roy and Ruth served as missionaries in France, in Paris and Lyon. This was a difficult



*Roy Harrison pictured with his wife and family.*

mission field but God blessed their ministry there and the work they began is now carried on by the local French people. Over 2,000 children are being taught the Word of God each year in the Lyon area through the various ministries, with the local Bible believing Churches and Christians involved.

In 1974, Roy and Ruth accepted the invitation to assist the European Director in the work of C.E.F. throughout the continent. They now live in Moutier, Switzerland near the European Headquarters. Roy travels extensively throughout Europe to train and help those involved in child evangelism. (C.E.F. has 280 full time workers in Europe). They are in charge of the production of literature for C.E.F. in Europe (books, tracts, visual aids etc). Roy also teaches at the Leadership Training Institute held at the Headquarters in Kilchzimmoer, Switzerland. He visits a number of Bible Colleges each year to present the challenge of reaching children for Christ and to teach classes on child evangelism.

The Harrisons have four children — Joanne, Christine, Lynda and Paul. Looking back over twenty years of service with C.E.F. they are grateful to God for His faithfulness, goodness, blessing and guidance. Children have come to Christ from non-Christian homes and have joined evangelical churches. One church near Lyon started as a result of a Good News Club. Roy's parents have been living in Bangor for over twenty years — their farm at Portadown being taken over for the building of the new city of Craigavon.

#### Miss Margaret Elliott

Margaret is the twin daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. William Elliott, Rathcarbery House.



After becoming a Christian in 1967, God gave her the opportunity to serve Him in a variety of ways over the next ten years. She taught a Good News Club and a Sunday School Class and also sang at various gatherings. The minister during that period was the

Rev. Robert Topping and the Sunday that he preached his farewell service was also in a sense a farewell for her as well. She left in September 1977 to study for two years at the Faith Mission Bible College in Edinburgh. This was followed by a short three month study course at the European Headquarters of Child Evangelism Fellowship in Switzerland. While there she discovered that Roy Harrison, one of the lecturers, was also connected with Kingsmills, being baptised there as a baby.

In September 1979, she went to live in Omagh, Co. Tyrone where she took up the position of a local director with C.E.F. This involved teaching R.E. in schools and setting up a programme whereby children could be reached with the Gospel in homes, schools, summer camps or in the open air.

Early in 1983 she was asked if she would consider working in a Christian Bookshop in Dundalk, Co. Louth. The shop had opened nearly two years previously and was under the leadership of the Good News Trust, a committee of local Christians from different denominations. While worshipping one Sunday in Kingsmills, God used a sermon spoken by the Rev. T. V. Patterson to confirm in her heart that this was God's will for her. Over the past four years she has counted it a real privilege to be involved in the Work of God in Dundalk. The shop is called "My Word" because as Margaret says, "We believe the promise of God as given to Isaiah", *"My Word shall not return unto me void but will accomplish that which I please"*. Isaiah 55 : 11. Only eternity will reveal what has been accomplished through this ministry as God uses His Word in the lives of those who come into the shop."

Margaret is now a member of the Presbyterian Church in Dundalk and is at present responsible for the work in the Sunday School.

## CHAPTER 18

# MISCELLANEOUS STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

This chapter contains various items of information regarding the church, the property and the general area, which should prove interesting to the reader.

### NOTABLE DATES IN THE LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

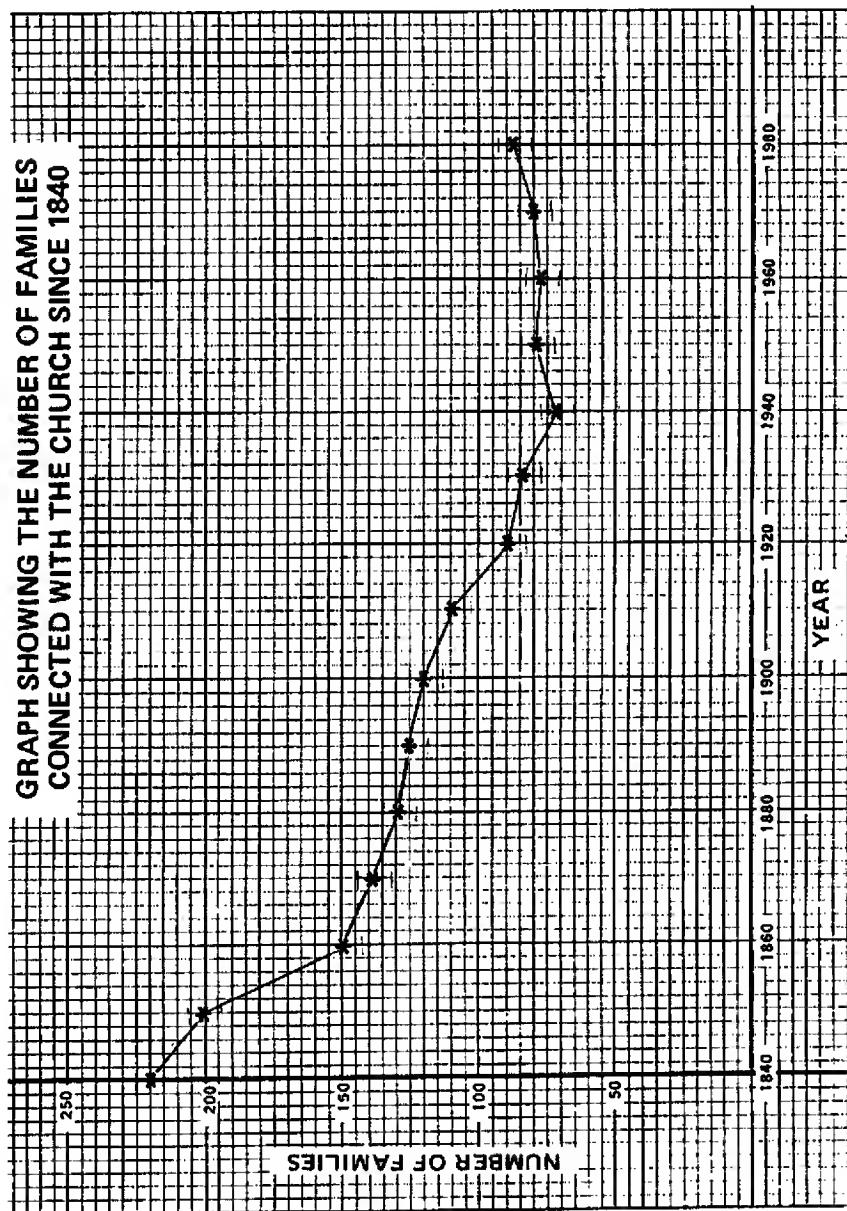
1777	Lisadian Townland bought by the Wilson Family, Dublin.
1788	Original Church built.
1792	Rev. W. J. Beatty installed.
1796	Rev. Beatty elected Moderator of Secession Burghers Synod.
1825	Retirement of Rev. Beatty.
1826	Installation of Rev. A. Henry.
1837	Rebuilding of the Church.
1841	Kingsmills joins the Newry Presbytery.
1863	Death of the Rev. Henry.
1864	Installation of Rev. J. Meeke.
1867	Building of Manse commences.
1873	Building of Kingsmills National School.
1880	Major alterations in Church.
1911	Acquisition of Cottage.
1913	Retirement of Rev. Meeke.
1914	Installation of Rev. E. G. Torrie.
1920	Resignation of Rev. Torrie.
1921	Installation of Rev. W. J. Kerr.
1922	Unveiling of War Memorial Windows.
1923	Repairs to Church.
1926	Resignation of Rev. Kerr.
1927	Installation of Rev. J. Graham.
1933	Death of Rev. Meeke.
1938	Kingsmills School handed over to Education Authority.
1949	Retirement of Rev. Graham.
1949	Installation of Rev. R. W. Adams.

1952/53	Major interior alterations.
1958	Resignation of Rev. Adams.
1958	Installation of Rev. D. H. Thompson.
1960	Death of Rev. J. Graham.
1963	Installation of Electricity.
1965	Retirement of Rev. D. H. Thompson and Rev. R. Topping became stated supply.
1977	Retirement of Dr. Topping.
1978	Union between 1st Drumbanagher, Jerrettspass and Kingsmills.
1978	Installation of Rev. J. Thompson.
1978	Opening of new Church Hall.
1979	Resignation of Rev. Thompson.
1979	Installation of Rev. T. V. Patterson.
1985	Resignation of Rev. Patterson.
1986	Installation of Rev. F. J. Gibson.

**CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS**  
**1862 - 1987**

Year	Families	Communicants	Baptisms	Elders	Number of Sabbath Schools	Number of Sabbath School Teachers	Average Attendance of Scholars	Average Attendance at Bible Class
1862	150	300	8	4	2	not given	40	-
1868	143	350	21	4	3	10	40	-
1873	130	300	18	4	3	6	80	-
1879	130	300	15	5	3	20	180	-
1880	128	280	21	5	5	21	200	-
1885	127	250	15	6	2	16	200	-
1890	125	260	15	5	2	18	190	-
1895	125	260	16	4	3	23	200	-
1900	120	270	13	5	4	24	210	12
1905	120	250	10	6	3	18	180	18
1910	110	240	9	4	2	11	130	23
1915	103	285	4	3	1	8	68	43
1920	90	250	5	2	1	7	65	7
1925	98	260	6	7	1	7	52	-
1930	87	166	7	3	1	4	32	-
1935	84	134	6	3	1	4	37	-
1940	74	136	13	4	1	4	43	-
1945	69	131	5	2	1	5	44	-
1950	79	152	8	2	1	5	40	-
1955	80	160	3	2	1	4	17	-
1960	76	156	7	2	1	3	20	-
1965	81	168	7	6	1	5	40	-
1970	80	170	6	6	1	9	61	-
1975	80	176	4	6	1	9	75	-
1981	87	188	11	6	1	10	76	-
1987	88	182	3	5	1	12	68	12

GRAPH SHOWING THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES  
CONNECTED WITH THE CHURCH SINCE 1840



**Earliest List of Communicants in Kingsmills Church  
as Recorded by Rev. Meeke 1864**

**Tullyhappy/Maytown**

William Dillon	Mrs. I. Gourley	Mrs. J. Buchanan
Simpson Dillon	Allan Auterson	William Buchanan
Mary Dillon	Mrs. Auterson	Widow Ann McKinley
Margaret Dillon	George Auterson	David McKinley
Widow Greer	Eliza Auterson	John Dillon
James Herron	Robert Brown	Mrs. Dillon
Margaret Herron	Mrs. Brown	William Dillon
Isaac Gourley	John Buchanan	Mary Ann Dillon

**Divernagh**

William Gourley	Mary Irvine	John McIlroy
Anne Jane Gourley	Bessy Irvine	Agnes McIlroy
Richard Gourley	Jane Irvine (Mrs.	James McIlroy
James McCormick	Sam McCormick)	Margaret Ann McIlroy
Agnes McCormick	Hugh Irvine	David McIlroy
William McCormick	John Gourley	David Cartmill
Agnes McCormick	Mrs. Gourley	Margaret Cartmill
Eliza Ann McCormick	William Gourley	Agnes Cartmill
Samuel McCormick	Margaret Graham	Sarah Cartmill
John McCormick	Samuel Herron	David Cartmill
William McCormick	Florana Herron	Andrew Kernaghan
Alexander McCormick	William Herron	Jane Kernaghan
Mary McCormick	Stuart Herron (Went	Sarah Kernaghan
John McCormick	to the USA May '68)	Joseph Allen
Esther Courtney		Elizabeth Allen
Margaret Courtney		William Williamson
		Margaret Williamson

**Eshwary/Tullywinney**

John King	Mary McCullough	Mary Rogers
Margaret King	(Mrs. Dodds	Alexander Rogers
	McKelvey's Grove)	
Mary King	Isabella McCullough	Sarah Rogers (Mrs. King)
Joseph King	Jane McCullough	James Rogers
Martha King	Elizabeth McCullough	Mary Rogers
Samuel McCullough	Susanna McCullough	Francis Harrison
Agnes McCullough	George McCullough	Ann Harrison
Jane McCullough	John Graham	Elizabeth Harrison
Livingstone Graham	Mary Graham	Margaret Harrison (Mrs.
Margaret Graham	Joanna Williamson	McCrum, Ryans)
George Graham	John Williamson	David Rogers
Agnes Graham	Eliza Williamson	Sarah Jane Rogers
George McCullough	Nana Graham	Mrs. Urey
Elizabeth McCullough	Watson Rogers	Samuel Graham

### Belleek/Carrickananny/Carrowmannon

Isabella Davidson	Sarah Jane McKnight	Agnes Andrews
Margaret Davidson	Catherine McKnight	Mary King
Archibald Davidson	John Watson	Elisabeth King
John Davidson (Newry)	Elisa Watson	Sarah McComb
William Davidson (Mountnorris)	John McBurney	John McComb
John McKnight	Mary McBurney	Jane McComb
Susan McKnight	Ann Watson	James McComb
James McKnight	Benjamin Watson	Mary McComb
Catherine McKnight	Moses Andrews	Robert McComb
Margaret McKnight (Mrs. Nesbitt)	Isabella Andrews (Belfast)	Letitia McComb

### Lisadian/Drumherriff/Rathcarbery

James Gray	William Harpur	Sarah McMullan
Lucinda Gray	Margaret Harpur	William McMullan
John Elliott	Elisabeth Harpur	Elisabeth McMullan
Sarah Elliott	William Harpur	John Wallace
William Adams	Isabella Harpur	Margaret Wallace
Margaret Adams	Matilda Harpur	Robert Harpur
William Adams	Margaret Cleland	Hannah Harpur
Mary Adams (America)	John Weir	James Porter
Sarah Adams	Frances Weir	Sarah Herron
Robert Adams (Bessbrook)	Sarah McMullan	Thomas Mofatt
Thomas Sinclair	Jane Elisa McMullan (Mrs. McPherson)	Jane Mofatt
Mary Ann Sinclair	Robert Moorhead	Martha Mofatt
John Chambers	Agnes Moorhead	Thomas Mofatt
Rachel Chambers	William Harpur	Sarah Mofatt
James Wallace	Jemima Harpur	Robert Mofatt
Margaret Wallace	Samuel Adams	Agnes Mofatt
Jane Wallace (Mrs. Ranton)	Eliza Courtney	Robert Mofatt
James Wallace	Cosgrove Paul	John McClure
William Reid	Mary Ann Paul	Sarah McClure
Agnes Reid	James Elliott	Robert Elliott
John Irvine Barron	Jane Elliott	Martha Elliott
Mary Barron	Thomas Elliott	John Summerville
John McKee	Henry McMullan	Mrs. Summerville
Jane McKee	Agnes McMullan	Thomas McPherson
William Qua	Jane McMullan	James Patterson
Thomas McKee	David McMullan	Mrs. Patterson
Agnes McKee	Jane McMullan	

## Knockavannon/Outlacken/Ballymoyer/Cavanakill/Lurgana

Nathaniel Nesbitt	Elisa McCullough	Mary Ann Patterson
— Nesbitt (Belfast)	Andrew McCullough	John Patterson
Eliza Nesbitt	Elisabeth McCullough	Jane Patterson
William King	James Frazer	Elisabeth Patterson
Mary King	James Patterson	John Whitten
Samuel King	Margaret Patterson	Jane Whitten
Mary Jane King (Mrs. Auterson)	Agnes Patterson	Martha Jane Whitten (Mrs. McCormick)
William King	John Patterson	John Whitten
Martha King	Mary Patterson (Mrs. Alexander, Ballenon)	John Patterson
John King	Jane Patterson	Jane Patterson
Sarah King	John Patterson	James Patterson
James King	Isabella Patterson	Ann Patterson
Agnes King	Mark Patterson	Robert Patterson
Elisabeth King	Mrs. Patterson	Samuel Patterson
Robert McCullough	Elisabeth Patterson	Margaret Patterson

## Drumcrow/Creggans/Greyhilla

Thomas Watson	Isabella McAldin	Elisabeth Wallace
Mary Ann Watson	Samuel McClure	Robert Wallace
David Watson	Anne McClure	James Paul
Esther Watson	James McClure	Sarah Jane Paul
William Donaldson	James Hooks	James McClure
Mrs. Donaldson	Margaret Jane Hooks	Mary McClure
Joseph McAldin	William Wallace	Mary Jane McClure

## Drumnahuncheon/Drumhoney/Tullyah

Henry Patterson	William Patton	Mary McKnight (Mrs. Patton)
Ellen Patterson	Martha Patton	William Robb
Mary Patterson	Charlotte Patton	John H. Edgar
Jane McDonald	Mary Patton	Elisabeth Edgar
Margaret McDonald	Moses McConnell	Susan Edgar
Julia McDonald (Belfast)	Mary McConnell	William Patterson
John Taylor	Jane McConnell	Ann Jane Patterson
Mary Taylor	David McConnell	James Burke
Hugh Patton	John Mitchell	Alexander McDonald
Ann Patton	Mrs. Mitchell	Martha McDonald
Jane Patton	Samuel McDonald	James Whelan
Jane Patton	Sarah McDonald	Agnes Whelan
George Patton	Samuel Robb	James Andrews
Eliza Patton	Sarah Robb	Sarah Andrews
Mary Jane Patton	John Robb	George Patton
Agnes Patton	James Robb	Jane Patton
Jane Patton	John Whelan	Thomas Townley
William Patton	Mary Jane Whelan	Agnes Townley
Charlotte Patton	William McKnight	Isabella Geary

## Others

Mrs. Henry (widow  
of Rev. A. Henry)  
William Jennett Henry  
Elisabeth Longhead  
(Mrs. W. J. Henry,  
Hillsborough)  
Mrs. Lockhart

Miss Samnel  
Samuel Porter  
Margaret Jane Porter

Susanna McMullan  
Mary Jane Johnston

The first page of the Death Register for Kingmills, which Mr. Meeke began to keep in 1874. As well as the date of death and the address of the deceased it also gives their age and the cause of death.

Deaths.				
1874				
March 5	Lancaster	70	long infn of	Craigavon
April 9	William Dillon	70	50 or	Tullygarry
April 7	William Mc Cormick	73	old age	Derryveagh
April 14	John Barron	3	croup	Derryveagh
May 5	William Mc Cormick	32	croup	Belleek
June 5	Willie Charles Steele	8	scalding	Craigavon
" 14	Benjamin Haught	14	"	Craigavon
May 27	Robert Harper	45	scarlatina	Rathcarbury
Aug. 29	William Harper	82	old age	Lisadale House
June	Robert Davidson		croup	Carrimacrae
Nov.	Mc Mullan		scarlatina	Tullygarry
1875				
Jan. 16	James Andrews			Carrimacrae
March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	James Mc Caw		85	scarlatina
March 27	Hugh Whelan	7	measles	Belleek
April 9	Andrew Barron	80	old age	Carrickgoban
April 7	James Whelan	13	measles	Carrickgoban
April 17	Mary Mc Mullan	73	old age	Lisadale
Feb.	Hugh Mc Mullan		"	"
Aug.	Graham			Tullygarry
Sept.	Jane Elliott			Lisadale
Sept.	James Mc Clure			Brenaghiff
Dec. 11 <sup>th</sup>	Mary Moon Patterson			Brenaghiff
1876				
Jan. 7 <sup>th</sup>	William Mc Caw	25		Belleek
March 13	David Weir	21	scarlatina	Lisadale
" 22	John Weir	24	"	Lisadale
May	William Mc Wright			Brenaghiff
August 7 <sup>th</sup>	Margaret Adams		old age	Lisadale
October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Robert Elliott	67	smallpox	Brenaghiff

**LIST OF THOSE WHO CLAIMED GRAVE PLOTS AT THE TIME OF THE  
FIRST MAPPING OF THE GRAVEYARD - 1903**

No.	Name	Grave Plots	No.	Name	Grave Plots
1	Agnes Graham	2	47	Mrs. King (Moore)	3
2	William R. Nesbitt	2	48	Robert S. Rodgers	
3	John Williamson (Eshwary)	3	49	John Barron	2
4	Annie Harpur	3	50	John Elliott (Sen)	6
5	Thomas Wallace	3	51	Samuel Alderdice	3
6	David Crozier	3	52	Miss Gracey	2
7	Robert Crozier	3	53	Mrs. Moffet	3
8	Thomas Moffatt	3	54	John McKinley	6
9	John & Wm. Freeburn	2	55	John Weir	3
10	William Williamson	3	56	William Harpur	3
11	Samuel Cartmill	3	57	Robert Williamson	2
12	William Paul	4	58	James McMullan	3
13	William Magowan	2	59	James Watson	3
14	Samuel Johnstone	6	60	Alexander McConnell	3
15	Samuel McMullen	1	61	John King	3
16	Agnes Herron	3	62	Mrs. Irwin	1
17	Robert Moffatt	2	63	William Andrew	3
18	Sarah I. McAldin	3	64	Mrs. James McComb	4
19	Mrs. Stevenson	4	65	George Patton	3
20	William Thompson	3	66	Mrs. Hooke	3
21	Thomas McKee	4	67	Mrs. James Gray	3
22	Jeanie Herron	1	68	Mrs. Samuel McComb	4
23	Robert McClure	2	69	Mrs. James McClure	3
24	William Rodgers	4	70	Mrs. Mitchell	3
25	Thomas Sinclair	7	71	William Rantin	3
26	William J. Rodgers	4	72	Mrs. Samuel Patterson	3
27	John Watson	4	73	John Elliott	1
28	William McKnight (Belleek)	5	74	David Elliott	3
29	Alexander McDonald	4	75	Thomas Elliott	3
30	James Robb	3	76	Archie McMullen	2
31	John Patterson	3	77	Robert Elliott	
32	Samuel Adams (Bessbrook)	3	78	Robert Elliott	
33	Bella Robinson	2	79	Hugh Samuel Patterson	
34	Samuel Graham	4	80	James Patterson	
35	Samuel Adams (Belleek)	5	81	David McMullen	2
36	John Patton	3	82	Mrs. Samuel McMullen	2
37	Sarah Elliott	5	83	William G. Greer	3
38	Mrs. Minford	6	84	Hugh S. Andrew	
39	Samuel Herron	3	85	John Edgar (Belleek)	
40	Mrs. William Harpur	3	86	Walter Patterson	3
41	William McIlroy	2	87	Hugh Patterson	
42	William Patton	3	88	Ben McMurray	2
43	Jane McConnell	3	89	Samuel Cole	3
44	Mrs. David Cartmill	3	90	William Crozier	3
45	Mrs. William McMullan	3	91	William Hunter	3
46	James Wallace	3	92	James Freeburn	3
			93	Susan Patterson	3
			94	Joseph Watson (Bessbrook)	2

LIST OF THOSE WHO CLAIMED GRAVE PLOTS — Continued

No.	Name	Grave Plots	No.	Name	Grave Plots
95	William Brown (Bessbrook)	2	106	John Elliott (Newry)	3
96	George McCullough	3	107	David Watson	
97	James Sinclair	3	108	William Ross	2
98	James MacDonald	3	109	Robert Freeburn	2
99	Robert Kelly	2	110	Joshua Cartmill	2
100	Robert Williamson	3	111	Mrs. D. S. Elliott	2
101	Mrs. Whitten	1	112	Robert Doran	2
102	Charles Barron	3	113	Thomas McCormick	3
103	John Barron	3	114	Mrs. James Freeburn	3
104	William Clarke	2	115	D. Acheson Elliott	4
105	Mrs. William Crozier		116	D. J. Freeburn	2
			117	Mrs. Samuel Cartmill	2



*View of graveyard at rear of Church.*

LIST OF PEWHOLDERS IN 1928

Pew No.	Family
1	Samuel Hooke and the McDonald family
2	Robert Samuel Rogers
3	Mrs. James Scott
4	John Harrison
5	J. J. Kernaghan
6	Simpson Elliott
7	James Harrison
8	John Williamson
9	Robert Rogers
10	James Patterson
11	Robert Elliott
12	Thomas Elliott
13	John Cartmill
14	Mrs. R. Williamson
15	—
16	Hugh Samuel Andrews
17	J. Williamson (Divernagh) and Robert Crozier
18	Mrs. McMurray
19	Mrs. Kernaghan
20	W. Ross
21	—
22	M. McMullan
23	S. Herron and W. Crozier (Junr) and James Johnston
24	John Graham
25	F. Muldrew
26	Mrs. Barber and W. Andrews
27	D. Rogers
28	W. G. Patton
29	James Robb
30	R. N. Harpur
31	David Elliott
32	Minister's Pew
33	Mrs. J. King
34	H. S. Patterson
35	Samuel and David Cartmill
36	David McCullough
37	Miss Graham and Mrs. G. McCullough
38	Robert Watson
39	William and Joseph King
40	John Watson Dillon
41	Acheson Elliott and Mrs. J. J. Andrews
42	C. Kernaghan and Thomas Wallace
43	James Sinclair and W. G. Greer
44	Thomas King
45	Miss Boardman and Robert Kelly
46	William Sinclair
47	—
48	Alex Ross
49	John Patterson (The Mill) and Robert Doran
50	James Meeke McComb

**LIST OF PEWHOLDERS - Continued**

<b>Pew No.</b>	<b>Family</b>
51	James Wallace
52	— —
53	— —
54	— —
55	Robert Marks and Mrs. Stevenson
56	James Freebourne
57	Mrs. Whitten
58	William and Joseph Patton
59	John Hamilton Edgar
60	Mrs. John Adams
61	Mrs. William McKnight
62	— —
63	Charles Barron
64	Sam McComb
65	William Crozier
66	Robert G. Moffatt
67	Robert Wallace
68	G. McDonald
69	Thomas and Alex Patterson
70	William and John Freebourne

**EXTRACTS FROM THE EARLIEST COMMITTEE MINUTE  
BOOK FOR KINGSMILLS CHURCH**

**May 19th 1895**

The Session and Committee met in the session room. There were present (Mr. Meeke presiding) and Messrs. Jas. Patterson, H. Edgar, R. Harpur, John King, Wm. Rogers, Jas. Paul, Geo. Auterson, Joseph J. King, Wm. Harpur, & John Elliott.

Some members of the congregation have complained of the limited stabling accommodation in connexion with the church. A small sub committee was appointed to consider the matter, as to the probable cost etc and report to the next meeting of the committee.

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**3rd June 1895**

The committee met in the session room. There were present Messrs. (Joseph J. King presiding) John Elliott, Geo. Auterson, & Wm. Harpur.

The sub committee appointed at last meeting about enlarging the stable, reported they had spoken to the members of the congregation who required stabling accommodation on Sunday and they expressed their willingness to contribute to the expense that would be incurred.

It was resolved unanimously to put up at the back of the session room a substantial wood shed with corrugated iron roof. The sexton applied for a small increase of salary. It was agreed unanimously to add ten shillings per annum to his salary, the said increase to commence at 1st May 1895.

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**Nov. 2nd 1896**

The Session and Committee met in the session room (Mr. Meeke presiding).

It was unanimously resolved to take out a policy of insurance on Kingsmills Presbyterian Church, Session Room and Stables also the Manse and outoffices belonging to the said church at the sum of £1250. The annual payment on this sum will be £1-0-6 to be paid on or before the 29th September in each succeeding year.

**JAMES MEEKE**

## EXTRACTS FROM KINGSMILLS YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUILD MINUTE BOOK 1953

At the meeting of the Guild on 5th November letters from Mr. Paterson of the Museum confirming the fact that the 10th December would be suitable for him and for Miss Peggy McCartney of Jerrettspass accepting the invitation to a Social on 27th November, were read. Arrangements were made for providing tea for the visiting speaker the following week. When the business was completed most of those present took part in games of table tennis and the meeting closed after books were returned and borrowed from the library.

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At the meeting of the Guild on 12th November a letter from Tullyallen Table Tennis Club, was read saying that its members would be pleased to come to the Social on 27th November. The Secretary was then told to write to the County Education Committee, asking for permission to use the schoolroom for the Social.

Mr. Kinnier Elliott was asked to invite Mr. Tommy McComb to supply the music. The business being completed the visitor, Mr. Patterson from the Cottage gave a short talk on fishing and then answered very ably, a selection of questions on a wide variety of subjects put to him by different members. Tea followed and after Mr. Patterson was thanked for his kindness in coming, the meeting closed.

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After the minutes of the last meeting were certified at the Guild meeting on 19th November, a letter from Armagh Education Committee giving permission to use the school for the Social, was read. Mr. Kinnier Elliott said that Mr. Tommy McComb would be pleased to supply the music. Preliminary arrangements were made about the tea and what games would be played. Arrangements were also made for transport for Mr. Paterson from the Museum and for seating the visitors on 10th December.

The business being completed, Mr. Adams continued with his series of talks on John Calvin. Some questions were then asked and after table tennis, the meeting closed.

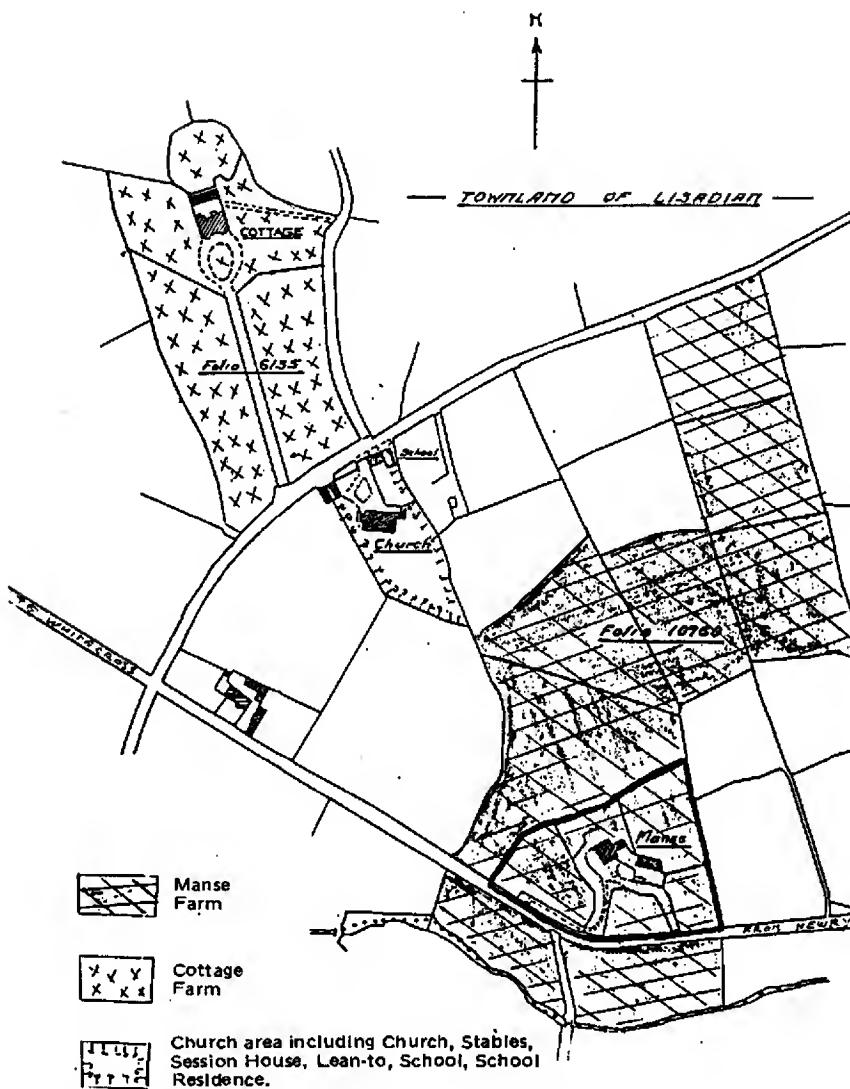
President : R. W. Adams  
Secretary : J. King

**SUMMARY OF CHURCH PROPERTY AT FIFTY-YEAR  
INTERVALS SINCE 1788**

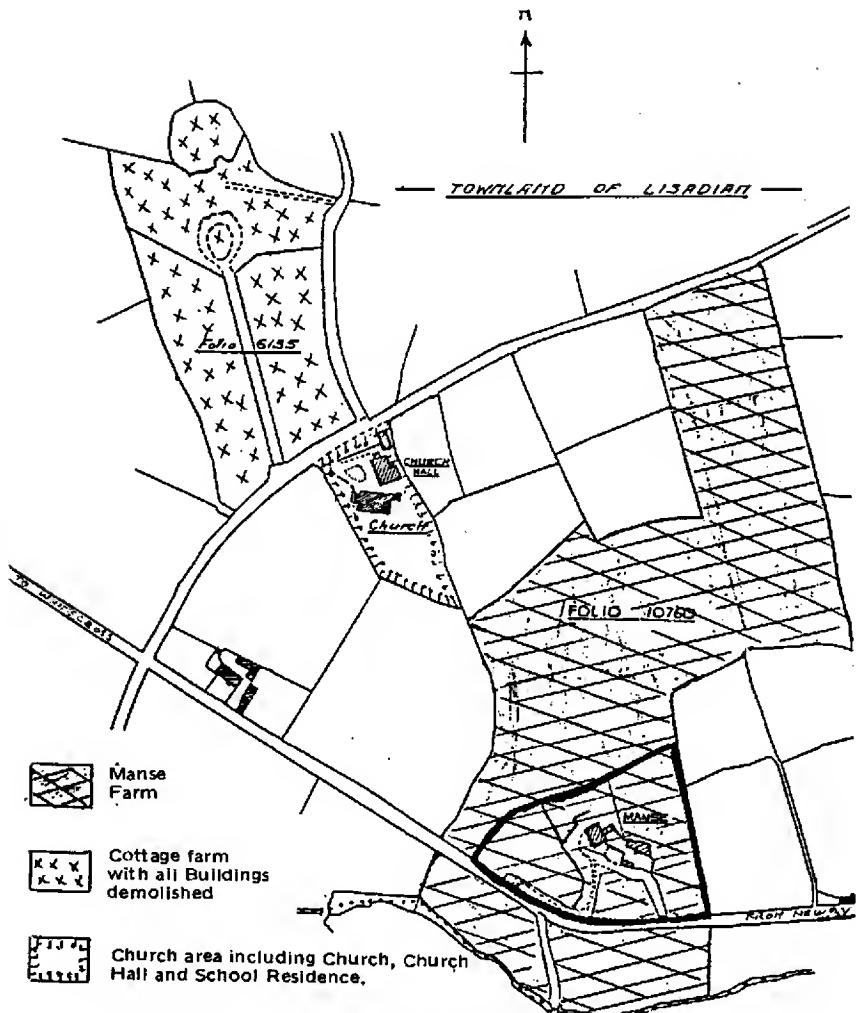
1788	a small thatched Church.
1838	an enlarged slated Church, a Session House, Stables, a Sexton's dwelling.
1888	Church, Session House, Stables, Manse, School and School residence.
1938	Church, Session House, Stables, Lean-to, Manse, School, School residence, Cottage.
1987	Church, dilapidated Manse, dilapidated School residence, large Church Hall with kitchen, toilets, etc.

**THE MANSE AND COTTAGE FARMS CONTAIN A TOTAL OF 18½ ACRES.** In 1983/84 the ditches in the manse farm were levelled, sheughs piped and some fencing done. The land is let every year — the combined income for both farms being £1,350 in 1986.

KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
MAP OF LANDS  
1936



KINGSMILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
MAP OF LANDS  
1988



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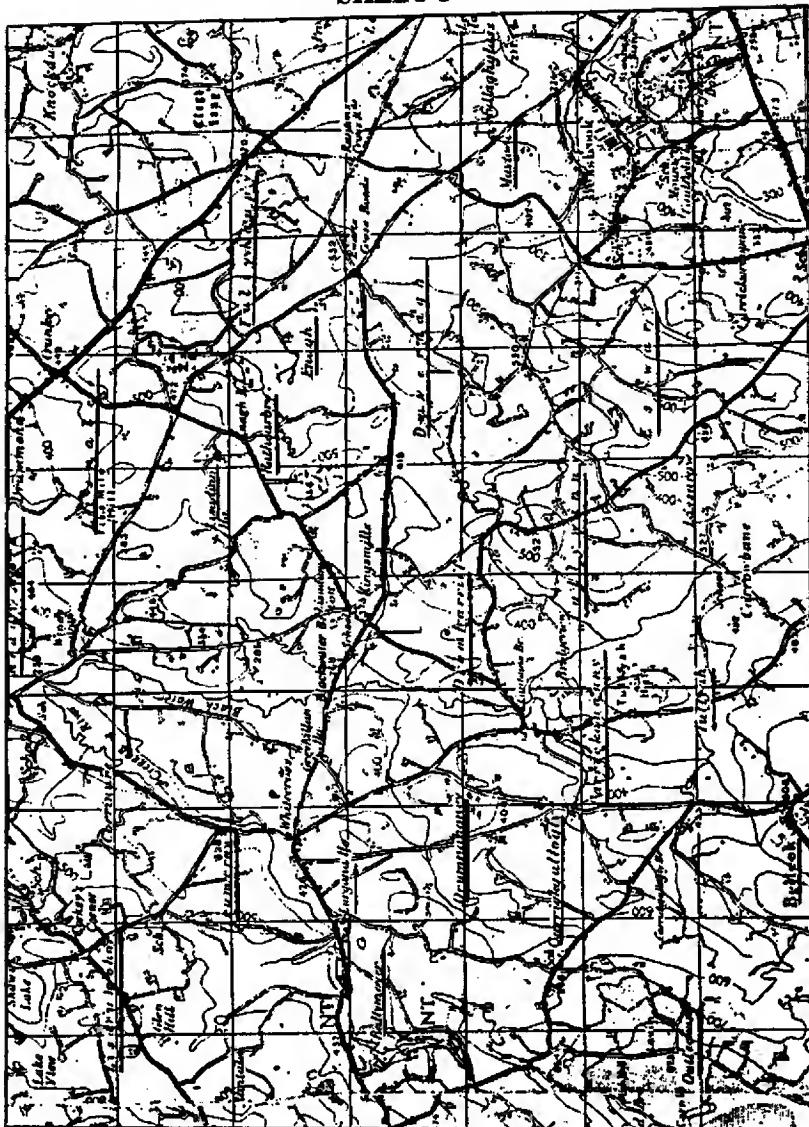
*Recent aerial view of the Church.*

## CENSUS FIGURES WHICH COVER THE MAIN TOWNLANDS IN THE KINGSMILLS AREA

Figures are given from 1851 - 1981 and show the decline in the population in most of the townlands. Lisnalea is the exception, with the population increasing in the 1960's due to the building of Lisnalea Park. More houses were built in the seventies and a number of families from the Park attend the Church and contribute to Kingsmills School.

TOWNLAND	DATE OF CENSUS										P = Persons					H = Houses				
	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1926	1937	1951	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H
CARRICKANANNY	90	20	75	16	77	17	52	14	44	15	48	18	31	12	31	10	30	11	27	7
CARROWMANNON	437	82	389	73	340	62	301	60	229	52	193	46	175	49	143	39	133	31	117	28
CAVANAKILL	NOT RECORDED										185	56	189	48	149	46	127	33	124	33
CREGGAN LOWER	57	12	50	11	55	11	38	8	32	7	29	8	29	7	25	6	22	6	19	4
CREGGAN UPPER	89	18	89	19	93	15	69	19	43	16	44	17	67	15	43	11	33	10	38	10
DUVERNAGH	483	80	415	83	359	78	381	73	292	67	200	50	175	46	154	38	139	33	112	30
DRUMCROW	93	23	90	21	70	17	83	17	57	15	59	15	56	15	64	13	75	14	66	14
DRUMHARRIFF	196	45	176	39	155	35	154	32	125	30	99	28	99	27	69	24	71	22	79	24
DRUMNAHONEY	122	22	109	22	82	19	77	19	99	17	105	18	63	16	54	14	59	14	30	10
DRUMNAHUNSHIN	90	15	87	18	91	19	68	14	47	13	41	10	35	11	31	11	27	11	42	11
GREYHILLAN	83	16	71	15	66	15	49	12	61	12	46	12	44	11	52	11	47	10	26	9
LISADIAN	282	69	285	63	264	56	212	51	185	47	144	39	94	28	81	24	81	26	56	18
LISNALEE	161	25	125	23	125	25	98	22	92	93	52	18	62	19	48	15	49	14	61	15
LURGANNA	NOT RECORDED										69	19	79	14	67	14	30	11	31	7
MAYTOWN	202	29	215	32	218	34	209	36	158	34	205	45	434	77	369	80	333	79	268	80
RATHCARBRY	100	19	104	19	95	18	77	18	58	18	58	18	53	15	37	10	25	9	28	7
TULLYHAPPY	422	65	283	47	256	45	243	47	186	42	163	39	155	38	116	32	94	26	86	28

**ORDNANCE SURVEY – ARMAGH  
SHEET 8**



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*Map to show where some of the townlands  
mentioned in the census are located.*

## THE MEANINGS OF THE TOWNLANDS AROUND KINGSMILLS

Most of the townlands in this area are so named because of their connection with agriculture, animals or the scenery of that part. The spelling has altered over the years so the old form has been put in brackets.

**LISADIAN** (Lisadien) The fort of the lowland or bogland containing strong men (soldiers) — a defensive situation.

**RATHCARBERY** (Rathcarbry) The fort of the O'CAIRBRE family.

**LISNALEA** (Lisnalee) Fort of the warriors or fort of the calves. (Ulster was the greatest of the five old provinces in Ireland — Ulster, Munster, Leinster, Connaught and Tara. It had a protection ditch or dyke running from the east in Co. Down to the west in Co. Donegal. This dyke had doors which were kept closed at night and opened during the day time for agricultural or industrial purposes. Lisnalea was probably a little fort to protect the calves of the farmers).

**TULLYHAPPY** The high land of the ripening.

**CRANKEY** Place of the trees.

**ENAGH** The marsh or bog.

**DIVERNAGH** (Duvernagh) The two gaps (probably in the dyke protecting the border of Ulster).

**CLOUGHERVAN** Ervan's Rock (Ervan was a mythical warrior in the days of CuCulain).

**TULLYWINNEY** Sunset Hill.

**DRUMHERRIFF** (Drumharriff) The bitter ridge (named in a song to commemorate a great hurt or disappointment — "Even the ground is sour."

**DRUMNAHUNSHIN** The ridge of the ash tree.

**TULLYAWE** (Tullyah) The mound of the ford.

**CARRICKANANNY** The rock of the marsh.

**CARRICKGALLOGLY** The rock of the fighting man.

**BELLEEK** (Balleek) The mouth of the stepping stones — before a bridge was built, stepping stones would have been used to cross the river at the north end of the present village.

**CARROWMANNON** "Carrow" is quarter meaning a quarter section of land. It has now come to mean an "area". So Carrowmannon means an area of land belonging to the Mannon family.

**DRUMNAHONEY** The high land of the kindling wood.

**CAVANAKILL** The concave of the wood.

**LURGANA** Several little ridges sloping down to fertile land.

**DRUMCROW** The high area of the hillocks.

**GREYHILLAN** Useless soil.

**CREGGANS** The rocky place.

**TULLYHERRON** The hill of the rowan trees.

**KEADYBEG** The little meeting place.

**KEADYMORE** The great meeting place.

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And Sean O'Callaghan's biography of James Connolly, ISBN 978 178 089 4348.

James Anderson  
5<sup>th</sup> November 2020